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PROTESTANTISM IN FRANCE

Volume Two
1598-1629

By
JOSEPH STANLEY WILL,

*Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Faculty of
Philosophy, Columbia University.*

Exchange Dissertations



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO PRESS
1921

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PREFACE

This volume is part of a general history of French protestantism which was almost completed when war broke out seven years ago. The publication of the whole work, which is to form three volumes, was interrupted first by the war and then by a prolonged illness. It is delayed again by the general complications that involve the book trade at this moment.

My interest in this question grew out of the study of literature and social conditions in France in the seventeenth century. I spent many months in French archives examining the documents that bear on the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes and gathered much material that throws considerable light on that event. Then it seemed impossible to be satisfied with a partial survey of the results of the Reform movement in France. Therefore I pushed my inquiry back through the sixteenth century into the fifteenth in an effort to discover what effect had been produced by that movement upon the thought and life of France. Volume I of this study, then, deals with the sixteenth century, volume II with the reigns of Henry IV and Louis XIII, volume III with the attempt of Louis XIV to establish religious unity and the results of that attempt in the eighteenth century.

I should like to thank Columbia University and Harvard University for the readiness with which they put at my disposal the resources of their Libraries. I wish also to express my deepest

gratitude to the officials of the *Archives Nationales* and of the *Bibliothèque Nationale* for their unwearying assistance and courtesy. To Monsieur Weiss, Secretary of the *Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme Français*, I owe more than I can tell, not only because of the extent of his knowledge of this subject but especially because of his active sympathy in facilitating my researches. I cannot omit, either, the names of Professors Shotwell, Todd, and Weeks, of Columbia University, to whom I am indebted in many ways for counsel and encouragement.

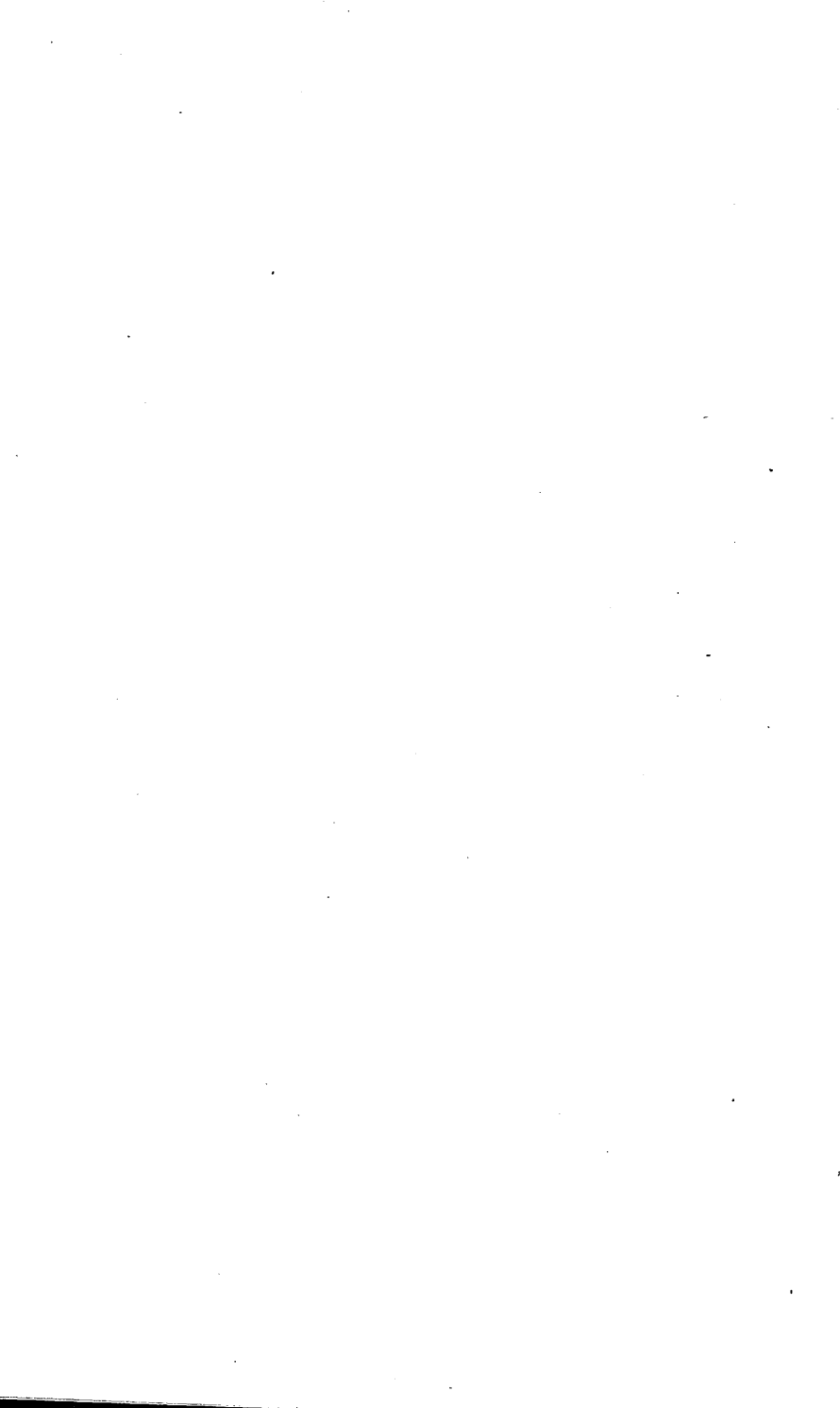
The present volume is substantially the study that was approved by the Department of History of Columbia University as a doctoral dissertation and later accepted by the Romance Department for the same purpose. I take this opportunity of thanking the Department of History for its courtesy to me in all our relationships.

J. S. WILL.

Aug. 16th, 1921.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
CHAPTER I	
Opposition to the Edict of Nantes.....	7
CHAPTER II	
The Reception of the Edict by the Protestants....	30
CHAPTER III	
The Administration of the Edict by Henry IV....	42
CHAPTER IV	
Protestant Alarm and the Assembly of Saumur...	61
CHAPTER V	
The Alliance with Condé.....	87
CHAPTER VI	
The Treaty of Loudun.....	107
CHAPTER VII	
La Rochelle and the Béarn Question.....	119
CHAPTER VIII	
Louis XIII, Béarn and the Protestants.....	136
CHAPTER IX	
The Menace of Civil War.....	155
CHAPTER X	
The First Huguenot Rising.....	174
CHAPTER XI	
The Second Huguenot Rising.....	209
CHAPTER XII	
The Destruction of Huguenot Political Power....	236
Bibliography.....	266



CHAPTER I

OPPOSITION TO THE EDICT

The Edict of Nantes (1598) was a composite document, embodying the wisdom of experience and based upon various treaties and edicts of pacification that had marked the successive stages of the preceding forty years of "frightful troubles, confusion and disorder". From the moment when protestantism in France had issued from its early stage of individualism, and had appeared as a political party fully organized and equipped, impossible to silence by arms and ordinances because of its increasing numbers, power and unity, a special legislation had begun to develop with respect to it. Inspired by the varying fortunes of war, according as the Huguenots were the dictators or were dictated to, that legislation was confused, hesitating and contradictory, alternating between absolute liberty and absolute proscription. But protestantism, while caught in the entangling web of parties, preserved in its nobler spirits, some consciousness, however dim, that its struggle was one for human justice as well as for religion, "religion without which christians cannot live, justice without which it is impossible for man to exist",¹ and resolved to endure a thousand wars and a thousand disasters rather than relax a single

¹ Du Plessis-Mornay, 7: 189.

point of what was absolutely necessary to the conservation of its churches. In the Edict of Nantes it wrung from its enemies what was too confidently termed "a good and enduring peace", "a law general, clear, precise and absolute", "perpetual and irrevocable". It was at least the first effective charter of toleration.

The Edict contented neither Catholic nor Protestant. To the former, its principle was altogether abhorrent, to the latter its limitations were humiliating.

For a religious peace there was no sure foundation. The Catholics were overwhelmingly superior in numbers and, untaught by the calamitous history of almost a century of dissent, remained unimpressed with the futility of attempting to impose conformity upon dissidents. The Protestants constituted a small but exceedingly effective minority. Their strength, combined with the peculiar circumstances of Henry's accession, enabled them to wrest this charter from a king to whom they had been absolutely indispensable "in this great conflict of so mighty and perilous affairs". They had served him too well in his great necessity for him to refuse to content them. To have disregarded them would have been to introduce into the kingdom greater disturbances than had existed there in the past.¹ Adventitious circumstances had thus forced a great majority to accept peace at the virtual dictation of a small minority. Plainly the Edict was unsupported by those moral conditions which alone could give

¹ *Lettres Missives*, 5: 15.

it meaning and permanency. Two factors maintained it: Henry's favour and Huguenot force. The former guaranteed peace, the latter ensured toleration. The failure of either spelled the doom of the Edict.

While Henry IV lived, the rights of the Protestants were little invaded. The prestige of his early influence as Protector and head of the sect while yet King of Navarre, survived the shock of his conversion as King of France, and held the Huguenots together. On his death they struggled against the spirit of dissension within their own body as well as against the growing intolerance of the court. The struggle was bootless. The dissolution of protestantism had begun. Eventually Richelieu accomplished its political extinction. Then, like Samson, when his locks were shorn, its strength had gone out of it and it was led away to bonds and imprisonment.

The Edict was the natural sequel to Henry's abjuration. On his part, it was no more the conscious anticipation of a changing social and political order than his conversion was the evidence of religious conviction. Both acts were the result of political expediency and were subservient to larger political policies. "Religion was never the dominating motive in the life of this prince".¹ He would gladly have seen the Huguenots follow his own example and return to the Roman faith. On the other hand, he knew how rash would be any attempt to force them to abandon their confession. In 1597 he said:

¹ Realencyclopädie, 13: 645.

I desire nothing so ardently as the reestablishment of the Catholic religion and should gladly give two fingers of each hand to to see but one religion in France. To-day the nation is at a point where that cannot be brought about by force. Thoroughly acquainted with the Huguenots by the length of time that I commanded them, I know that their forces are much greater than is generally supposed. The only way to bring about their ruin is to separate them from one another and to teach the principal cities in their possession to live in patience assured that force will not be employed against them. Every day many of them are converted even of the more prominent among them, whose example others will not be slow to follow. I swear to you and promise that I shall never appoint to the offices of the Courts of Parlement as lieutenants general of bailiwicks or as Heads of presidial courts any persons who are not of the Catholic religion, and, having received this assurance, you may make the most vigorous resistance should I ever be circumvented.¹

Again in 1598:

I cannot keep the Huguenots out of public offices without hazarding the repose of my kingdom, for this party is too strongly rooted in the state, too powerful within and without to be coldly disregarded. I have been too well served and helped by them in my necessity.²

In 1599, to a deputation from the Parlement of Normandy, Henry again declared:

My chief desire is to see one day one and all reunited to the Catholic religion; this accomplished, I should not regret death the following year. I shall join with the Holy Father in working to that end; but it is not enough for him to go to mass who does not do good works.³

He lent practical assistance to the proselytising schemes of the clergy by establishing a pension fund (12,000 crowns) for converted Protestants, a

¹ Floquet, 4: 99-100.

² Lettres Missives, quoted in B.S.H.P. 2: 30.

³ Floquet, 4: 149.

year or more before the Assembly of the Clergy set aside moneys for the same purpose.¹

Henry declared that "he brought his convictions as a sacrifice to his duties".² The one clear conviction that Henry possessed was that he must be king of France. Having become king he was animated by one dominating motive, namely the giving of peace to his distracted realm. It was upon this altar, if upon any, that he sacrificed such religious convictions as he may have possessed. "Necessity is the law of the time", said he. In his conversion he yielded to that law. "I know that the Catholics constitute the largest number in the state", and he adopted the religion of the majority. His abjuration was part of the price of his crown. In granting the Edict he was moved by the same compulsion. *Un roi, une loi, une foi* was not with him an absolutely fundamental political maxim. Differences of religious opinion were to him entirely consonant with love of country and with national unity. His argument was that creed must be forgotten in patriotism. As early as 1577 he declared that peace in France would never be possible until religious liberty was accorded to the Huguenots. In 1599, replying to the remonstrances of the Parlement of Paris, he said: "the Catholic religion can be maintained only by peace and the

¹ In 1598 the General Assembly of the Clergy voted 5,000 crowns as a "fund to provide a living for ministers, since it has been reliably informed that some of them persisted in their error for fear that they and their families would be reduced to beggary". *Procès-Verbaux*, July 21, 1598.

² Ranke, 1: 568.

peace of the state is the peace of the Church". "For long I have had a design and I long to carry it out: it is the reform of the Church. I can not do it without peace". The Edict then was the price of peace.

What I have done is for the good of peace. My intention is to keep the state that I have won. I can do it only by peace. We must save the state, but it must be saved by peace. There must be no longer any distinction between Catholic and Huguenot, all must be good Frenchmen. . . . I am a shepherd king, who will not to spill the blood of my flock but to gather them together with the gentleness of a king and not with the violence of a tyrant. Death to me were less harsh than the sight and longer endurance of the miseries in which the kingdom is submerged; and if it hath not pleased (God) as yet to permit that He be worshipped in one and the same form of religion, let it be at least with one intent and with such order that there may not be on that score disturbance or dissension. Now I have judged it necessary to give touching the whole matter a law general, clear, distinct and absolute by which our subjects may be governed on all differences which have heretofore sprung up among them, or may arise hereafter. . . . And we implore and await from His divine goodness that He make our subjects understand that in the observation of this our ordinance consists, after their duty to Him and to our service, the principal foundation of their union, concord, tranquility, and repose, and of the re-establishment of this state in its pristine splendour, opulence and force. And on our part we promise to cause it to be exactly observed without tolerating the least infraction thereof.¹

But the peace of Henry was a transitory peace that made no appeal to the intellect or heart of the general of his subjects. It was a peace forced by the prestige of a great man who was a great captain. This was its fatal defect. With all the appearance of a *loi fondamentale*, it was in every essential but a temporizing and a compromise.

¹ B.S.H.P. 2: 128 ff.

The terms and implications of the Edict were fruitful of dispeace. The preamble lent colour to the pretension of the Catholic that the provisions of the Edict were in intention only temporary. Henry's own words to the parlements, to the clergy and to his confidants are only too emphatic in their confirmation of this intention.

It is not only the preamble of this cumbersome document that indicates a divided purpose or a dual authorship. The very body of it bears unmistakeably the impression of a gift, a concession, a toleration, a temporary yielding to the necessities of the case, in the hope that the differences of opinion for which it provided would soon disappear. The detail into which it attempted to enter, gave it a rigidity that destroyed its usefulness for the needs of a vital and growing society. Its dependence upon the provisions of previous documents destroyed the finality which should have characterized it. It allowed neither freedom of worship, nor freedom of speech. It left a stigma upon freedom of conscience and established a distinction between freedom of conscience and the public celebration of religious rites. It erected a dual system of justice. It guaranteed to the Protestants only such State protection as they themselves could enforce through the command of fortified places. It kept the Protestant in a galling bondage to the priest by forcing him to pay tithes, to observe the laws of Rome in regard to marriage and to lie idle on saints' days. Rigid geographical delimitation stifled organic growth and became the source of endless dispute. As a concession to a

strong and ambitious religio-political party, the Edict threw that party at the same time into the position of a tolerated and dependent minority inviting it to defend its life against those who regarded its destruction as their religious duty. The Edict, to be sure, cemented the alliance between Henry and the Protestants, and so furnished a guarantee against the domination of the Crown by the Catholic party. But it possessed a vital weakness in that the Protestants, unlike the Catholics, depended upon the Crown for financial support, while no possibility existed of making provision against arbitrariness on the part of the Crown.

The great service of the Edict lay in putting an end to civil dissensions. On the other hand, it emphasized the breach which it was intended to heal and while terminating open strife, merely changed the field of battle and altered the weapons of war. For a generation protestantism had fought in open field with sword and breastplate and had flourished. Through the next eighty-five years it struggled against the enmeshing technicalities of the law and withered before the force of public opinion, expressed in social ostracism, legal quibbling and Jesuitical interpretation.

No great body of public sentiment rallied unconditionally to the support of the Edict. Of the Catholics who had consistently opposed every previous edict of toleration, approval came from only a few persons, whose broadness of sympathy was immediately denounced by the more orthodox. "A cry of surprise and indignation had arisen from

every corner of France at the first news of such an edict". The hostility of the clergy, of the University, of the Sorbonne, of the Provincial Estates, of the parlements, could not be overcome. It was checkmated by the king, whose personal authority alone forced the new decree through the channels of legislation, and then only at the expense of certain of its provisions. Only a few of its general clauses were made public.¹ It is not probable that even Henry's great prestige could have succeeded in forcing upon the parlements the enactment of the provisions of the secret articles.

As for the Protestants, their demands had been so greatly reduced in the original draft of the Edict that they met with cold resentment its publication in a form still further modified by the demands of clergy and parlements. They never ceased to declare that they had been dealt with deceitfully, and, so long as they enjoyed any prestige as a party, to demand that the Edict be restored to its first form.

Catholicism gained much by the Edict. Its property was restored to it. Its offices were re-established wherever they had been interrupted by the Civil Wars. "Mass was again celebrated in two hundred and fifty walled cities and in more than two thousand parishes, whence it had been banished during the last fifteen years". As a result of treaties with Leaguers many parishes hitherto either closed to catholicism or shared with

¹ The Edict of Nantes as finally promulgated consisted of four sections. In the first section were ninety-two general clauses. The second section was made up of fifty-six clauses called "secret articles" in modification of the general clauses. Sections three and four were two letters patent modifying the general provisions in regard to financial aid and surety-towns.

it by protestantism, were now thrown open exclusively to the former. Tithes were still imposed upon the Huguenots. Consecrated Catholic ground was not to be profaned by the interment of heretics. Cemeteries were reserved for the faithful. In short, catholicism was reintegrated in its ancient properties and rights. Its full expansion depended now, Henry said to the clergy, upon

the regularity of your lives, upon the strict performance of the duties of your station and upon the constant exercise of Christian charity. See to it that by your example the people are as much stimulated to well-doing as they have hitherto been discouraged from it. You have exhorted me to do my duty. I exhort you to do yours.

The Church as a whole had never disguised its hostility to the temporizing tendencies of the king. By the fomenting of civil strife it had thrown every obstacle into the path of Henry's accession so long as he remained a Protestant. Having achieved his conversion, it strove for the destruction of heresy "in the interests of the Church, for the service of God, the repose of the kingdom and the salvation of its subjects". It retarded the satisfaction of Huguenot claims by specious insinuations concerning their self-interestedness and by asserting that they were a political faction seeking favour, rather than religious reformers intent upon freedom of conscience. Its long and successful resistance to the demands of the Protestants had induced in it the belief that the framing of the Edict was a mere device on Henry's part by which he might the more readily achieve the dissolution of protestantism.

His purpose was to reduce all his subjects to the Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman religion. But that could be accomplished only by time, by tacking and turning as a good pilot does, always tending in the direction of the harbour although he cannot sail in a straight line.¹

But the benefits that accrued to catholicism did not in its eyes excuse the toleration of the heretic. The whole Church from the pontiff down repudiated the compact. Two years earlier the pope had ill-concealed his anger at the news of the registration by the Parlement of Paris of the edict of 1577. His anger was now not less but more real, although its expressions and effects were modified by the politic conduct and speech of the cardinal legate. The latter was entirely *persona grata* to the French king and court, but his presence in Paris during the summer of 1598 was so confessedly embarrassing to the king that Henry felt himself obliged to delay the publication of the Edict until after the departure of the legate.

Even to his own ambassador at the papal court, Henry, fearing the consequences of the pope's displeasure, had spoken of the Edict only in the most guarded manner. At the news of the mere possibility of such an edict the Pope wrote to the duc de Joyeuse and the duc de Luxembourg protesting against it. To the French ambassador he declared that

bad as the edict would be at any time, it was much worse now that the kingdom was at peace. As for me when I hear of such things from him (the king) it crucifies me.

Five months later (March 28 1599) after registration had been made by the Parlement of Paris,

¹ Cardinal d'Ossat, quoted in B.S.H.P., 47: 285. Cf. Lettres Missives, 5: 113.

the French ambassador, Cardinal d'Ossat, writes as follows:

He (the Pope) was filled with grief and sorrow by the edict which your Majesty had made in favour of the heretic to the prejudice of the Catholic religion. . . . His Holiness was of the opinion that your Majesty had made the edict only for the sake of appearing to give contentment to the Huguenots, that you would welcome the opposition of the clergy to it and that the parlement would refuse to pass it in order that you might use this afterwards as an excuse to these Huguenots, but that now he thought that the entire contrary was true. In the first place he saw an edict of the most accursed kind that could be imagined, by which liberty of conscience was permitted to all and sundry, which was the worst possible thing in the world; that these occurrences drove him to distraction; that he had absolved you and acknowledged you as king against the advice of the noblest and most powerful of the princes of Christendom, and now the gratitude and consolation that he received therefrom was this, that he was the fable of the world and the sport of everything; that this edict which you had made in his very face was hurtful to his reputation and good name. It was as if he had received a cut across the face. Thereupon he allowed himself to be so transported with anger as to add that as he had exceeded all bounds in consenting to absolution, so he would not hesitate to exceed them once more if it were necessary in order to do the very opposite.

Then the papal nuncio argued with Henry, imploring him "to reduce his misguided subjects to obedience and affirmed that by displaying severity towards the heretics, he would win the good graces of the pope and the pope would support all things for the peace of France".

It was in this spirit that the Assembly met in 1595-6 and pleaded for peace, while avoiding special reference to heresy. Its spokesman exhorted the king, to

follow in the steps of Clovis, Constantine and the kings of Judah, like Asa, in pressing all his subjects to adopt the religion which happily now was his own. The evils and ruin that have been and

are widespread in this kingdom, arising out of the divisions which exist among your subjects, cannot cease, and your Crown assume its full splendour, except by the union of your subjects in the true Catholic, Apostolic and Roman religion, having to our great regret learned by the experience of the last thirty-five years that division has been the sole cause of sapping and enfeebling it. But it having pleased God who has it in His sovereign protection, to call you into his Church, in which the kings, your predecessors, have been nourished for twelve hundred years, we look forward to the reunion with it of your subjects who have left it if it will please your Majesty, by and in addition to your example, to invite them into it and to summon them by a decree and warn them to seek instruction.¹

Thus the Catholics far from anticipating an edict of toleration, fondly hoped for an edict of conformity.

When at last the Edict had been granted, the opposition of the clergy was extremely bitter. They took no pains to disguise their disappointment. "Their animosity increased daily" and prolonged the conflict into the new century. Over the resistance of certain bishops, as over the stubbornness of the parlements, Henry was obliged to ride roughshod. "A great cry arose from Catholic pulpits, which in certain quarters became so seditious that their occupants were thrown into prison". Attempts were made to intimidate the magistracy. "All judges", cried the preacher at Saint André, "who consent to the publication of this edict are damned, and must answer for the souls of all who as a result may be converted to heresy". "'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself' is not to be understood of the Huguenots", cried another, "to prevent the establishment of whom, one should spare nothing; nay, he should

¹ Recueil, 13: 1143.

even give all his blood, in spite of the authority of kings and princes."¹ The Sorbonne and faculties of the University determined to close to Protestants their degrees and offices. Finally, as a climax to this fanatical opposition to Henry's demand for toleration came the uncovering of three plots by Capuchins and Jacobins for his assassination.

The organized opposition of the clergy was difficult to deal with. Their General Assembly, which opened its session at Paris in May 1598, devoted several sessions to a discussion of the new law and the best methods to be employed for preventing its verification. They refused any agreement with the Edict. Deputations waited on Henry and presented their remonstrances against it. They argued, with some justice undoubtedly, that it had been forced upon him. Henry tried to placate and reassure the Assembly by declaring that his great preoccupation was the restoration of the Catholic Church to its pristine splendour. "The Church" said he, "will be as great as it was a hundred years ago". Then the Assembly made its demands more specific. It opposed the fresh concessions proposed by the Edict to protestantism north of the Loire. It contended that Protestants in this district should be satisfied with permission to continue the public exercise of their religion in those places now in their possession, that such privileges should not be enlarged by reference to any rights that might have been enjoyed under prior treaties or in happier circumstances, as was

¹ Floquet, 4: 242.

contemplated by the Edict of Nantes,¹ and that the sole liberty accorded to ministers should be freedom of residence. It demanded that catholicism be reestablished even in cities and localities of great Protestant majorities, such as the surety-towns; that Catholics should not be asked to contribute to the support of Huguenot ministers; that the clergy should not be amenable to the jurisdiction of iniquitous *chambres mi-parties*;² that freedom of communicating by deputation with foreign Synods and freedom of assembly in Synods, colloques, and other religious assemblies now accorded by the Edict should be rescinded, since both of these concessions would serve only as occasions for treasonable and seditious machinations. They further insisted that catholicism should be restored to Béarn, from which Jeanne d'Albret had driven it in 1569.

On all of these points except the first, Henry gravely yielded. Then by letters patent he attempted to recompense protestantism privately for the wrongs done to it by his public concessions to the Clergy. He refused to consider any further modifications of the narrow liberty of worship granted to the Protestants by the Edict. The permission of the king had been made necessary for the convocation of "consistories, colloques or provincial and national synods".³ Three months later

¹ Articles 9, 10, 11.

²Chambres mi-parties: Special courts in which Protestant and Catholic magistrates sat in equal numbers, having cognizance of cases in which Protestants were involved.

³ Art. 34 (secrets).

this limitation was removed through letters patent, by which the Huguenots might enjoy "in regard to the holding of consistories, colloques and synods the same forms and freedom as before, without being forced to observe more rigid regulation". Privily also he consented to the prolongation of the session of the Assembly, which he was unable to grant openly for fear of the Catholics.

The objection of the Clergy to contributing to the maintenance of Protestant ministers was far fetched. No direct contribution for this purpose was levied on Catholics. Henry had made a grant to the Huguenots for the support of their ministers, and only very distantly could the so-called *don gratuit* be regarded as taxed for the payment of this grant. Henry did not withdraw his grant as a result of the representations of the Clergy, but he made a concession to the scruples of the latter by directing that payment should not be made out of his ordinary revenue. Again, in response to the wish of the Clergy, the king, to the great indignation of the Protestants, declared that cases in which the clergy were defendants should not be tried before the mixed tribunals. Catholicism was permitted to reestablish its services wherever these had been interrupted, though it might be in the Protestant strongholds. An edict was promulgated from Fontainebleau by which the Catholic Church received privileges in Béarn similar to those granted to the Protestants in France. On this basis, although the bastard had been legitimized and a horrid schism in the Church had become an openly constituted breach in the State, the

Clergy made no further official objection to the registration of the Edict.

The Parlement of Paris supported the Clergy in their objections, and in addition opposed those terms of the Edict which seemed to infringe their peculiar prerogatives. Six full weeks were devoted to a discussion of its articles, to the exclusion of practically all other business. Vigorous objection was made to the freedom of assembly granted to the Protestants, on the ground that such a liberty, in addition to being a humiliation to the clergy, whose Assembly met only by express permission and under the direct supervision of the Crown, was derogatory to the royal authority. It made strenuous objection to the principle of admitting Huguenots to public office, and in spite of the indignant and caustic retort with which Henry met their expostulations succeeded in modifying article twenty-seven so as to make it, after all, a sort of religious test. Henry also honoured the protest of the parlement in regard to burials¹ and deleted that clause which allowed Protestants to bury their dead in Catholic cemeteries until special cemeteries should be provided for them. The most serious modification produced in the Edict by the hostility of this parlement was in the form of the *chambre de l'édit*² which had been erected in connection with it by article thirty. Instead of being composed, as originally agreed, of ten Catholics and six Protestants, the new chamber admitted

¹ Art. 45 (secrets).

² A court in which Catholic and Protestant judges sat in unequal numbers, Catholic in the majority.

only one Protestant, the remaining five being distributed among the six *chambres des enquêtes*. In extenuation of this concession to Catholic opinion, Henry had to urge that the new proposal had been approved by certain prominent Protestants, Du Plessis-Mornay, Bouillon and others, whose complacency had been obtained apparently by conceding to Protestants the right to choose the Catholic judges of the court.

Even with these concessions, the Edict was not registered by the Parlement of Paris without great difficulty.

Henry had awaited the departure of the legate (Sept. 3, 1598) before publishing the Edict, so that it was not till five months after his signature had been affixed that public discussion of it began. The clergy having been conciliated, Henry convoked his Council to smooth the way for registration by the Parlement of Paris. One of the Presidents of the latter having publicly expressed his hostility to the Edict, Henry minimized his influence by appointing him French ambassador to Venice. In the place of the exiled Séguier, de Thou, who had been on the original commission to draft the Edict and who was regarded by Catholics with the greatest suspicion, took charge of the negotiations before that body.

On December 15 Henry summoned the parlement to register the Edict. That body asked that the Edict be not enforced until Catholic worship had been established in Protestant towns. On February 7, the king, having examined the cahier of the parlement on the 5th, the Edict still remained

unregistered, and Henry again received the parlement at the Louvre. He upbraided them with vehement bitterness for their factiousness, narrowness and ingratitude. On the 16th again Henry pleaded with the court in the name of peace to proceed without delay to the passing of the Edict. On the 25th it was registered with the modifications above indicated, and on March 17 following commissioners were dispatched to the various provinces for its execution.

In this case as in others "the prestige and authority of the Parlement of Paris served as a rule for the parlements of the provinces". Grenoble, Bordeaux and Toulouse sent deputations to the king to protest against the enactment of the Edict. To these Henry replied with characteristic dryness and brevity, or with unusually caustic sarcasm and brutality. To M. de Chessac, of the Parlement of Bordeaux, who had spoken one and one-quarter hours:

Not only have you not wearied me by too great length but on the contrary I have thought you brief, such pleasure have I found in your speech. For I must confess in your presence that I have never heard any one speak better. But I would that the body corresponded to the raiment. . . . A long time ago when I was merely King of Navarre, I knew your ills but had no remedies at hand to apply to them. Now that I am King of France I understand them even better and I have at hand the means of curing them and of making those repent who would oppose my commands. I have made an edict and I wish it to be executed, and whatever may happen, I am determined to be obeyed. It will be well for you if you give good heed.

To those of Toulouse:

It is a strange thing that you cannot shake off your ill will. I see plainly that you are still Spanish in your hearts. Who would

believe that those who have hazarded life, property, estates and honour for the defence and preservation of this kingdom, are to be regarded as unworthy of honourable and public offices, as if they were traitorous Leaguers deserving to be fallen upon and banished from the realm. On the other hand, the men who have moved heaven and earth to ruin this State are to be looked upon as loyal Frenchmen, deserving and competent to hold office. I am not blind; I see clearly; I intend that those of the religion shall live in peace in my kingdom and be capable of holding office, not because they are of the religion but because they have been faithful servants to me and to the French crown. . . . I am determined to be obeyed and determined that my edict shall be published and executed throughout the kingdom.

The Parlement of Grenoble then registered the Edict, as it stood, on September 27, 1599. That of Toulouse yielded to the arguments of this "sage, prudent and experienced prince, except for which we should never have proceeded to its publication without other modifications than those we have made", and enacted it on January 19, 1600, with the proviso that it should remain in effect "during the good pleasure of the king only". Bordeaux indicated that it acted under compulsion in accepting the Edict and only at the urgent and repeated command of the king (January 26, 1600). Dijon passed it on January 12, 1600. The Parlements of Aix and Rennes on August 11 and 23 respectively, of the same year, but declared that they approved of no other religion than the Catholic, Apostolic and Roman. The Parlement of Rouen, where local conditions made the struggle a long and bitter one, passed the Edict with certain modifications on September 23, 1599, "without approving of the Reformed Protestant Religion, and until such time as it may please God to favour

the king by the union of his subjects in the Catholic, Apostolic and Roman religion". It reserved the right also of making representations at a later date concerning modifications which it deemed desirable in the Edict. These restrictions were not withdrawn until August 5, 1609, ten years later, and then only at the express command of the king, repeated several times as well orally as in writing. Belated as it was, Rouen alone registered the Edict unconditionally.

Finally, then, the Edict was enacted everywhere but only after prolonged and heated debate. The principal difficulties in the way of its acceptance had been the opening of all public offices to the Protestants and the establishment for them of separate courts of justice. These difficulties were surmounted by the hard path of compromise. Even then all of these courts continued to nurse a no secret resentment at the withdrawal of Huguenot affairs from their jurisdiction.

In the recalcitrancy of courts and clergy the people were not slow to find encouragement for the expression of their local jealousies. Rein was given to popular passion. In various parts of the kingdom, outbursts occurred which were to be traced directly in many cases to the influence of priest and magistrate. When Henry replied to the protests of the Parlement of Paris he told them that "their delays had given rise to strange disturbances, for at Tours, Mans and elsewhere men had gone so far as to hold parades against the Edict". In August, after the verification of the

Edict, "Henry had to quell an uprising which its enactment and the secret machinations of the parlement had occasioned in Paris". At Tours the Protestant temple was destroyed, but "his Majesty to prevent other occurrences of this sort had twelve of the principals hanged". In April 1600 the Protestant Assembly then in session at Saumur urged that the newly appointed commissioners be dispatched immediately to their tasks because of an outbreak in Lyons. "It denounced to the king a priest who was inciting the people of Tours against the religionaries". Protestants were mobbed in Poitou. In Blois, Catholic officers of the court interfered with worship when right to public exercise was undisputed. "The clergy of Limoges, to stir up hatred against those of the religion, and to embitter the animosity of the papists in that city, on the eve of Corpus Christi threw down the altars, broke the images and rifled the sacrament: the next day going to the church, they ascribed the deed to 'those of the religion'; but the facts having been revealed by one of themselves, complaints reached the ears of the king, who as punishment, gave orders that the perpetrators should be publicly whipped". The Bishop of Montpellier, a Protestant centre, fortified and garrisoned his castle, apparently to overawe the Protestants of the city. The Catholics took the law into their own hands, not merely by interference with the Huguenots in funeral corteges and elsewhere, but as well by anticipating the business of the commissioners appointed to execute the Edict in the premature and often violent

restoration of Catholic worship in places from which it had been driven by protestantism: so at Bédarieux, and at Tarascon and at many other places.

Such were the difficulties met with by Henry on the part of his Catholic subjects. He met them like the soldier that he was, curtly, even brutally, and determinedly.

CHAPTER II

THE RECEPTION OF THE EDICT BY THE PROTESTANTS

The promulgation of the Edict revealed differences among the Protestants themselves which prostrated all unity of council and effectiveness of effort against the manoeuvres of the clergy and of the court. In its final form the Edict had been signed and promulgated after approval by only a few of the leaders of the Protestant party, of whom were Du Plessis-Mornay, the duc de Bouillon, the duc de Sully, and Théodore de Bèze.¹ These men represented, however, a really considerable number whose satisfaction with the Edict was prompted by various motives. Some of them were weary of strife and demanded peace at any reasonable price. Others, actuated by political and social ambitions, were unwilling to scrutinize too closely either the Edict itself or the manner of its administration by the Crown. The latter, while loath to follow Henry's example by outright conversion to catholicism, were so influenced by the spirit of Paris and the court as to prefer religious colourlessness to social ostracism. These "Indifferents" or "Moderates" were able also to make their organized influence felt by ignoring the Protestant Assembly and transmitting their views directly to the king. It was through them that, in spite of oaths of unity and secrecy, the transactions of the Protestant

¹ de Thou, cxxii.

Assemblies always reached the ears of Henry and the Court. This party was largely recruited from the district north of the Loire, but it included as well churches in the southern provinces.

On the other hand there were the zealots, or the *consistoriaux*, or, as they were at times dubbed by Henry, the *fous du Synode*, who persisted in a demand for the restoration of the Edict to its early unmodified form as well as for its registration in all the sovereign courts. This section proposed to maintain an uncompromising attitude until their demands had been fully satisfied. They demanded the recognition of their Political Assemblies as well as of their National Synods and, far from welcoming the Edict, they bitterly resented the easy complacency of the "réformés de Paris et de la cour".¹

The sect was further disorganized by the contentiousness imported into their Assemblies² through the jealousies of the great party leaders, like Bouillon, Sully and Rohan.

It was thus that the Huguenots "leaned already to their ruin when they obtained the Edict of Nantes".³

¹ Benoit 1: 275 ff.

² Early in the course of the Civil Wars the Protestants had begun to organize themselves for secular purposes as they had already done for religious purposes. Bodies called Political Assemblies existed for many years before they received from the Assembly of Sainte-Foi in 1594 a representative character and organization patterned upon the ecclesiastical system. After that date each province had a council of its own called a Provincial Assembly which was answerable to a representative council for the whole kingdom known as the General Assembly. It was this body that was largely responsible for the Edict of Nantes.

³ Ruhlière, 1: 12.

That there should have been any exhibition of enthusiasm among the Protestants over the enactment of this measure was almost impossible. None of their representative bodies uttered a word of approval. The Assembly of Châtellerault deplored its insufficiency. The National Synod assembled at Montpellier less than a month after the signing of the Edict speaks of it in the briefest terms and only in grudging acceptance:

Messrs. Chamier and Brunier having brought letters from the assembly of our brethren at Châtellerault, along with the Edict granted us by the king, and having given us to understand that owing to a lack of unity and understanding we had not obtained all that was necessary for the freedom of our religion, the judgment of our causes and the surety of our lives, the synod recognizing this defect protested its desire to observe more closely and better than formerly the (oath of) Union sworn and signed at Mantes,¹ as well in regard to the following of all the clauses of the Edict that has been granted as in regard to all other matters essential to our religion and to our legitimate conservation, in all obedience to the king, and to see that all the provinces observe the same thing and to proceed by way of ecclesiastical censure against those who show themselves refractory to the remonstrances made to them.

In this laconic resolution, where a pathetic attempt is made to present an unbroken front to the enemy, may be seen and felt the tensivity of the situation and the division within the synod itself. The lack of confidence in the good faith of the court and in the king's power to enforce the Edict is plain in the next following clauses of the minutes of the Synod which (1) urged the governors of the surety-towns to see to it that the Edict was applied to the areas of Catholic majorities before they caused its

¹ A General Assembly held at Mantes in 1594 which attempted to heal divisions that had appeared in the Protestant body.

execution in areas of their own jurisdiction, and (2) admonished the provinces to obey the instructions of the Assembly if the latter should ask for financial assistance in its effort to provide for the proper execution of the Edict. There is only one other reference to the Edict in the proceedings of this synod, namely a resolution that "the special prayers ordered to be said in certain churches because of the persecution, will cease as soon as the Edict has been published". Approval then came only from a minority among the Protestant leaders that could find no public voice.

But if the satisfaction of the Huguenot was moderated by his bitter memories, by his invincible mistrust, by his ambition, by his sense of the unmitigated hostility of his Catholic compatriots, his resentment might have been soothed by a consideration of the improvement in his situation. Equality with the Catholic he had not obtained. But the public exercise of his faith, which had been so often proscribed, the enjoyment of public dignities, in which many saw greater danger for catholicism than in granting rights of public worship, the possession and control of his children, his right to life itself, even his claims to decent burial, were now all assured to him. The Edict allowed him to reside in any part of the king's dominions, to perform the public acts of religion in certain defined areas, to educate his own children and to take an active part in public affairs. Special courts had been established in which the presence of judges of his own creed assured him of the even exercise of justice. Provision was made for the

establishment of schools wherever churches were permitted. The payment of tithes to the clergy was made less galling to him by the compensation offered in the royal grant, which contributed to the support of ministers, schools, and surety-towns. In short, the Huguenot had become an enfranchised citizen without the sacrifice of his faith. It was for this that he had been "resolved to endure a thousand wars and a thousand ills" believing himself "to be therein performing the king's service more than if he had confronted Spain in arms". His struggles and sufferings had definitely ameliorated the conditions of his own existence. They had also achieved an unrivalled gain in the direction of religious liberty and human freedom. The Huguenot might have been pardoned a feeling of exultation.

The Political Assembly which had sat in continuous session since April 1, 1596, refused to accede to the order for its dispersal as contained in Article 82 of the Edict, although this order had been reinforced by private letters from Henry himself and the Assembly made unnecessary by the appointment of deputies-general. The opinion prevailed that the continuance of the Assembly was essential to the execution of the Edict and consequently to the peace of the realm. The prolongation of its session would reassure the Protestants and act as a restraint upon the Catholics, who were only too eager to exercise the influence of their numbers and prestige at Court for the nullification of the Edict. Certain Provincial Assemblies, moreover, which found fault with the

Edict and demanded its amendment, lent their support to the reluctance of the General Assembly to disperse.

Eventually Henry, by letters patent, which as such had no need of registration by the courts, consented to their importunities so far as to license the continuance in session of a committee of ten, "until the Edict should be ratified by the Parlement of Paris, without however having power to make any fresh demands nor to solicit anything else than the execution of the Edict and the expedition of commissioners for its execution". Immediately the Assembly broke out into vigorous protest against these limitations, demanding for the *Abrégé* permission to sit until the "complete execution of the Edict". These importunities elicited a further concession from Henry, namely, that the Assembly's Committee might sit until the establishment of the *chambre mi-partie* of Bordeaux (Guyenne). Notice of this extension of time was conveyed to the Protestants through a private letter to Du Plessis-Mornay, Henry not venturing to alter the brevet for fear of the Catholics.

Satisfied with this, the Assembly dissolved in June, having instructed the provinces to proceed to the election of candidates for the new Assembly and having left at Châtellerault seven of its members as an interim committee until the *Abrégé* should be constituted. Each province nominated three persons, of whom the king selected one. The elections dragged out through the entire summer and fall. On November 24, the *Abrégé* convened

with but five members present. It remained in session until May 31, 1601, closing its meeting at Châtellerault on October 25, 1599, and reopening at Saumur on November 24 following. The change of place was made because the Assembly wished to be where it might more conveniently consult with Du Plessis-Mornay who was governor of Saumur.

Now this *Abrégé* had received permission to sit until the erection of the *chambre mi-partie* of Guyenne. But it was unable to present to the king a list of Protestants eligible for that chamber until June 1600, the provincial assembly of Guyenne having made these nominations in May. The Chamber was established three months later.

The moment agreed upon for the dissolution of the Assembly had arrived. In the face of Henry's wishes and of the advice of certain of the nobles it remained in session. In defence of its actions it urged a variety of reasons. It believed that its continued existence was demanded by the necessity for a medium of communication between the body of the Protestants and the monarch, that should serve to mitigate the impatience of the former with the delay in the unequivocal execution of the Edict. The Assembly knew at the same time that many of the provinces were communicating directly with the king. It believed also that its existence exercised a wholesome restraint upon the Catholics.

On the other hand Henry urged it to dissolve because of the irritation it provoked among his Catholic subjects and because the Edict had been

executed by all the parlements. Moreover "he exhibited a certain jealousy lest the Assembly should form a body within the state".

The Assembly appealed to the provinces for instructions. By way of reply, the National Synod then in session at Jargeau, sent deputies to Henry praying that, since he was determined that his order for the dissolution of the Assembly should be obeyed without delay, they might have "one or two deputies at Court and that for the purpose of nominating them His Majesty should permit them to assemble; and it has been resolved to petition his Majesty to be pleased to grant such an Assembly at Sainte-Foi for October 15 next to which the provinces will send their deputies, charged with instructions from the churches of their Departments".¹

To this suggestion Henry yielded and the Assembly dissolved (May 31, 1601) having prayed God "that he always guide His Church by His Holy Spirit and defend it against the assaults and machinations of Satan and of his agents".²

The *Abrégé* had been in session for two years and a half. It flattered itself that its existence and activities modified the passion of the opponents of the Edict, hastened its registration by the various parlements and at the same time exercised a wholesome restraint upon ebullient protestantism by furnishing it with a voice for its discontent.

The first business of the *Abrégé* was the preparation of a protest to Henry against the modi-

¹ Aymon 1: 250.

² Anquez, 186.

fications that had crept into the Edict after its signature and as a result of the criticisms of clergy and parlement. Some of these objections seem, on the face of things, to be trifling. In the light of later history they assume a real significance. Reference has already been made to those that were most important, from one point of view, namely those concerning ecclesiastical assemblies, the withdrawal of clergy from the jurisdiction of mixed courts of justice and the providing of cemeteries. In others, difficulties of interpretation were discovered. For example, what was the exact meaning of *maisons des ecclésiastiques* in article 3, and of *par eux établis* in article 9? Did the first mean "all the fiefs and seigneuries of the said ecclesiastics"? Was the second to be interpreted with some liberality, or did it mean that public worship could not be said to have been "established" unless every minute formality had characterized its performance and every act had been publicly registered? Henry replied that "*maisons*" meant "buildings" and not lands; that *établi* should be understood in a broad and general sense. These favourable definitions were not incorporated in the Edict, however, and sixty years later those very terms, discussion of the import of which seemed for the moment so contemptible, became the subject of sinister and shameless chicanery.

Despite their protests Henry refused to remove the prohibitory clause in article 11, added by request of the clergy, which refused the right to establish a chapel in episcopal or archiepiscopal cities or in ecclesiastical seignories as a second

lieu de baillage, or that one in article 20 which ordered the absolute cessation of all noise of labour on saints' days.

Pressure was exerted upon the king for an early verification of the Edict by the parlements and for the immediate establishment of the new courts of justice. The Assembly set eagerly about the arrangement of the details of the latter so far as it was concerned in them. It decided that the provinces should nominate members for their own chambers. It ordered that "of the six Protestant councillors of the Parlement of Paris, one should be nominated by the Isle-de-France, one by Angoumois, Aunis and La Rochelle, one by Anjou, two by Normandy and Brittany and one by Poitou; but Poitou, after the establishment of the chambers of Rouen and Rennes, was to choose two and Berri one".

The Assembly protested also against the demands of the Parlement of Paris that the six Protestant magistrates in its *chambre de l'édit* should be distributed among the various courts of parlement. But, certain of the Protestants approved of this change, and article 30 stipulated that only one member should sit in the *chambre de l'édit*. The remaining five went to the five *chambres des enquêtes*.

The *Abrégé* kept in constant touch with the provinces and watched over the immediate execution of the Edict. When infractions occurred it called these to the attention of the king and used them as an argument for urging the instant appointment of commissioners for each province to

supervise the details of its administration. Commissioners were appointed in 1599 and 1600.

The impoverished condition of the exchequer caused delays in the payment of the sums promised for the support of ministers and even serious reductions in the sums accorded for the maintenance of the garrisons in surety-towns. In 1598 only 57,000 crowns were paid instead of 66,000. In 1599 payment was made on the basis of seven months and twenty days to a year. In 1600 the grant was reduced by 25,000 crowns and the maintenance of the officers. In 1601 little more than one-quarter of the total sum was paid (50,000 crowns). Remonstrances were of no avail.

The Assembly resisted, too, the claims of Catholics in certain cities of Protestant majorities, that they were eligible as "consuls".¹ The king decided against the Assembly by virtue of article 27 of the Edict, which decreed that all of the king's subjects were eligible for public office.

A cahier was also drawn up concerning various minor grievances reported from the provinces. In the *chambre mi-partie* of Castres the Catholic president, although a junior magistrate, claimed precedence over the Protestant. His claim was supported by the Parlement of Toulouse on the ground that members of its body had precedence over those of the *Chambre*. The contest engendered bitterness because the councillors followed the example of the chairman. The king ordered the observance of the Edict, which was explicit on this

¹ Councillors.

point,¹ and favoured the Protestant contention. An article concerning cemeteries was referred to the commissioners with instructions to furnish cemeteries for the Protestants at the public expense. Another grievance which the Assembly sought to remedy was the claim on the part of the Catholics of the right to continue services in chapels forming part of private houses, once owned by Catholics but now in the hands of Protestants. "This matter was of some importance, because there were few houses of any consideration which did not contain a chapel. This forced the Protestant seigneurs to keep their houses open whether they would or no for the celebration of the Mass". The king promised arbitration on the principle that if any of these chapels had an endowment, the Protestant owner should pay for the erection of one elsewhere in a locality suitable to the bishop. If there were no endowment, then the owner's wishes should be obeyed.

¹ v. articles 36 and 48.

CHAPTER III

THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE EDICT BY HENRY IV

Little did the Huguenots understand that the law for which they had waited and struggled was to be the very medium of their ruin. Strong in organization, they had absolute confidence in Henry's good faith and in their own strength. The great majority of them were contented with the Edict and welcomed the new life which its conditions opened up. They invaded the trades and professions, and in many parts of the country soon controlled the fruits of commerce, agriculture and industry. Already sharing in military and administrative dignities, they soon occupied a proportionately large number of the minor offices of state. Even the *exaltés*, still mindful of their wrongs, not content with the Edict, insisting upon trifles and more and more lost in ecclesiastical, ritualistic and theological subtilities, suspicious and militant, even these felt the upward swing of Protestant affairs and shared in the new hope. Their belief in the future of protestantism was fanatical and misleading, but under the inspiration of that faith things of great and permanent value were achieved, as well as much that was self-destructive.

Benoît asserts that since protestantism might now be openly and safely embraced, the Huguenots looked for the early decline of catholicism

and the widespread adoption of the principles of reform. In any case, they became animated by a great missionary zeal. Church buildings arose everywhere, structures more suitable for the form of worship peculiar to protestantism than those usurped Catholic edifices which the Edict forced it to abandon. A publicity campaign was instituted. Ministers were specially appointed by the National Synods as champions of Protestant doctrine and the Church undertook to defray the expenses of printing controversial works. The Synod of Saint-Maixent assigned special subjects of controversy to each of the various provinces so that these should "choose persons capable of investigating the subject who should so apply themselves to that work as to be ready when need or occasion arose to argue the matter with the adversaries of the Church". Such disputations became frequent. The scholarship of the Protestant was pitted against that of the Catholic and a great impetus given to the spirit of free enquiry. Multitudes of pamphlets poured forth from presses, public and private. Pulpits thundered more than ever with denunciations of catholicism, and the Synod of Gap added to the "Confession of Faith" the too famous article which declared the Pope to be himself "antichrist and that son of perdition foretold in the Word of God and the scarlet woman". An echo of this over-militant protestantism is heard in 1609 when the rumour spread that the Huguenots had planned a Saint Bartholomew of the Catholics.

The increased provision now made for educa-

tion is another evidence of the new energy that had been infused into French protestantism by the passing of the Edict. The preceding generation had done what it could in the establishment of schools and colleges, but these were so inadequate that until 1598 candidates for the ministry were almost forced to seek their training abroad. In the Edict of Nantes an attempt was made to provide a remedy for this condition of affairs.

The instruction of youth was a cardinal principle in the minds of the reformers. Its first great value was that it enabled every one to read the Bible as the revealed word of God and the only basis of faith and morals. Its further purpose was that the young might be "made fit one day to serve the Church of God in the exercise of the sacred ministry". Hence the solicitude of the earliest reformers for the establishment of schools, and the constant insistence of the Church Discipline and of the Synods upon the need for churches and upon the duties of parents to provide carefully for the instruction of their children, who are "*la semence et la pepinière de l'église*".

The Protestant Synod of Saumur (1596) "found it expedient to write the provinces to do their utmost to establish one college each and at least two academies by co-operation".¹ But these modest beginnings were overshadowed by the ambitions that seized the synod as soon as the Edict became actually a fact. Fired by new zeal and subsidized by the king, the Synod of Montpellier (1598) erected into universities the two

¹ Aymon, I: 197.

schools of Nîmes and Montpellier which had been in existence as small theological seminaries since the middle of the century. In addition to these, the same synod founded two new Academies at Saumur and Montauban. Eventually eight of these institutions existed side by side, offering instruction not only in theology but as well in arts, medicine and law. The difficulty experienced in providing native teachers for these academies was overcome by inviting men from the Calvinist Churches of Europe, especially from Scotland, Holland, and Switzerland. Among the new universities, Montauban, Saumur and Sedan soon became prominent in reputation, and attracted large numbers of students from every corner of Europe.

As with the universities, so with the colleges. The modest ideals of 1596 were soon forgotten. Municipalities, churches and provincial synods rivalled one another in their eagerness to establish institutions for secondary education. Of the sixteen provinces into which France was divided for ecclesiastical purposes, Provence alone never possessed a college. On the other hand, some of the provinces, such as Berry with three, and Anjou with four, had several. In all thirty-five of these institutions were created. Their support came from the fees of the students, from municipal grants, and later from subsidies by the National Synods. The subjects taught were Latin, Greek and the elementary sciences.

Such generous provision for the education of their ministers had been possible only by the royal

annual grant of 45,000 crowns. But the payment of these moneys soon became so irregular that the resources of the communion found themselves taxed beyond endurance. Complaints became general that the number of colleges was too great. Criticism began at the Synod of Saint-Maixent, 1609, and was repeated at almost every succeeding synod. The natural result ensued. The colleges began to suffer greatly through the lowering of the standards of scholarship. The National Synods becoming alarmed refused to authorize the increase of existing institutions and urged the provinces to concentrate their efforts upon one institution each and thereby "render them worthy of the name of College".

In spite of the ardent opposition of the clergy, primary schools were established as provided by the Edict wherever the right of public worship was possessed. There should be at least one in connection with every Church, for which the individual church through its consistory was to be responsible. So well again did the consistories obey the admonitions of the National Synod that probably more often than not there were several schools in one parish. Against this condition of affairs the Roman Catholics complained, and in 1611 the Edict was interpreted as providing for only one school in connection with each church, an interpretation to which the reformers did not pay too much heed.

Schools were founded and maintained also by many of the seigneurs who possessed the right of public worship in their châteaux. To these also

exception was taken by the Catholics. Again the Catholics objected when private tutors gathered large classes about them in places where schools were forbidden by the Edict. In the primary schools were taught reading, writing, arithmetic and the catechism, until such time as the teaching of the latter was prohibited. The teachers seem to have been chosen and certificated by the consistory, which usually provided also for the maintenance of the school or schools under its jurisdiction. The consistory was responsible also for the discipline of the school and in many cases made attendance compulsory, a fine being imposed upon parents who neglected to send their children to the Protestant school. It must be remembered that Protestant children were admitted also to the Roman Catholic schools, but the strongest censures were pronounced by the synods against parents who gave Roman Catholic tutors to their children or sent them to the "schools of priests, monks, jesuits or nuns".

If the Protestants asked "*ni partage ni apanage en ce royaume et ne veulent avoir que leurs âmes pour butin*" their relations past and present with the Court show that they did not, to say the least, despise political power and that they frequently overestimated the force of the material resources at their disposal. They now clung with desperate faith to their General Assemblies.

Henry had succeeded in dissolving the Assembly of Saumur at the expense of two concessions material in the history of protestantism. First, he proposed that two commissioners should remain

in attendance upon his person who would be the medium of communication between the Protestants and himself, thus reviving an office found as far back as 1563. This permission was granted them, Benoit says,¹ so that they would be deprived of a pretext for continuing the Assembly of Saumur and it seemed to be a remedy for all their troubles. Secondly, he authorized a General Assembly for the purpose of nominating these commissioners.

Henry was determined, however, that this Assembly should be the last. To him such re-unions furnished the great Protestant lords, whom the Church was always diligent to invite, with too powerful an instrument for agitation, tending to the constitution of an independent body and the subversion of his authority. There were too many of these gatherings. The Protestant system was unduly complicated and expensive. What with political assemblies, both national, regional and provincial, with synods, national and provincial, with consistories and colloques, there seemed to be an incessant coming and going, a constant incitement to local as well as general unrest. Such an organization, in its political aspects especially, remained a constant challenge to peace, a menace to that balance which Henry tried scrupulously to maintain. It not only irritated the Catholic subject, it wounded the pride of the king. It was a reflection upon his power and a sully of his glory. He was no longer the defender of his people nor the source of justice. He exercised himself to wear down the hostility of the parlements to the regis-

¹ 1: 367.

tration of the edict so that no excuse should remain with the Protestants for the longer retention of the surety-towns, or for the perpetuation of the system of which they were the symbol. He set his face against the Political Assemblies so that every menace to the peace of his realm might be removed and that there might remain no derogation from his power. He thought that the National Synod might enlarge its powers to include the functions of a Political Assembly, which it actually had done on more than one occasion. He was convinced that the latter was demanded only "for the satisfaction of passion and at the suggestion of a few". He was weary of their complaints and indicated to them that it was time for these to cease. He was offended at their distrust of him and their constant disregard for his wishes. How much more would the establishment of their Provincial Councils (1601 and 1608), the renewal of their oath of union (1605), which itself many considered as the setting up of a Republic, the constant traversal of the king's proposals, the ever recurring truculence of their speech¹, the introduction in the days of their greatest contentment of the bellicose resolutions of anti-edict days, how much more would all these acts impress him with the need for such strict regulation of their affairs "as would redound to the glory of God and the welfare of the Churches". Henry not only saw their truculence but foresaw that it would be their ruin. Nor was he alone. The more enlightened of the Protestants themselves discovered it.

¹ P. de l'Estoile: 523, 613.

The widespread suspicion cherished by the Roman Catholics of the Protestant Assemblies was not wholly founded upon the actual transactions of these Assemblies, but had its root in the limitations of the time. Henry's apprehensiveness in their regard did not arise from what he feared they would do, but from the disaffection which his toleration of the Protestants engendered among those by whom the throne was surrounded. The factions into which the State had been so long divided had thriven upon the impotence and nullity of the monarchy. The royal power was just emerging from a period of eclipse during which it had been neither "respected nor obeyed". The chaotic conditions of the period of the religious wars and of the League still survived in the minds of men. The great cities and great nobles having been as it were so many independent bodies in the state, found it difficult to reconcile themselves to the centralizing ambitions of the monarch. The spirit of feudalism still lingered among cities, nobles, soldiers, leagues, and in the Church itself, and they were constantly dreaming of rebellion on one head or another against the growing power of the Crown. In a time of inter-factional jealousy, the unity and organization of so large and powerful a body as the Protestants was likely to kindle alarm, while their constant re-unions excited suspicion. It was for this cause that the Edict had been altered to read "by the permission of His Majesty" when it was a question of holding general meetings. But of all those treasonable acts of communication with the foreigner, of conspiracy

against the State, of republican ambitions, of which the Catholics accused the Huguenots, the Catholics themselves during the same period, in cities, societies and parties had over and over again been guilty.

The necessity for the continuation of the General Assembly from the Protestant point of view is obvious. More than the National Synod, which concerned itself only with ecclesiastical and disciplinary matters, the Assembly was the great sign and central seat of Protestant unity. To it were referred all external matters, those pertaining to the constitution of the Church, its defense and temporal welfare, in short, all its relations with the body politic. It was a great historic body, the body that had held the Huguenots together and had at last won the Edict, the body upon which they thought their very existence depended. "There being no society nor community that can exist if it be not permitted to have in its midst some means of intercommunication, which is the more necessary for protestantism since the greater number of the churches are surrounded by those of contrary religion, in the proportion of a hundred to one", the deputies pressed the king not to interdict their political assemblies.

On the other hand, whatever his personal convictions, Henry was never able long to resist the importunities of the Protestants. For three years he refused to grant permission for another Assembly. Then he yielded and authorized that of 1605. But he stipulated that this should be the last, that its numbers should be reduced, that a royal com-

missioner should be present at its sessions, that its sole business should be the nomination of deputies-general, that it should take the place of the meeting of the National Synod called for that year. The reformers prayed for another during the following year but were refused. They provided, however, by anticipation for Henry's refusal by delegating authority to the National Synod to nominate deputies as Gap had done.

In 1607 disagreement arose between the National Synod sitting at La Rochelle and Henry over the manner of the election of deputies and the king permitted another Assembly for 1608 in the hope that this dispute might be settled definitely. Between 1601, then, and the date of Henry's death three General Assemblies were convened, at Sainte-Foi, in 1601, at Châtellerault in 1605, and at Jargeau in 1608.

The election of the deputies-general was the first cause and business of every one of these Assemblies. The Assembly of Sainte-Foi drew up the conditions of their appointment, and made their tenure of office but one year. The latter condition Henry ignored by maintaining Saint Germain in that office from 1601 to 1605. The methods of nominations were then altered by the Assembly of Châtellerault at Henry's command. The following alternative methods were of his suggestion: Either the Assembly should designate twelve persons from whom the king would choose six to serve two and two for *two* years respectively; or the election of deputies should be made by the provinces in turn; or, and he gave instructions to his

commissioner Sully to insist in case of conflict upon this alternative, they should elect two persons known to be entirely acceptable to him. The Assembly, under pressure from Sully, forwarded six names, from whom Henry chose Lanoue and Ducros. Certain provinces wished to add a minister to the deputies, increasing the number to three, but this fell through, meeting with no general approval.¹

To the Assembly of Jargeau Henry consented because, contrary to his wishes, the Synod of La Rochelle had again revived the dispute concerning the methods of the election of deputies, insisting on an annual direct election. The Protestants wished the term of office of their deputies to be limited to one year but the king was determined that it should be longer.

Both had their reasons. The Protestants, under the pretext of releasing those who had been sacrificing their own private business for the sake of the general good, desired to prevent their deputies from growing accustomed too easily to the atmosphere of the Court; and the king, who knew that the amenities of the Court softened the most intractable, wished to avoid too frequent changes so that he might not be exposed to the embarrassment of seeing public business pass from the hands of one who had become familiarized with his surroundings and tractable into the hands of a new-comer whose bearing was always stiff and uncouth at first. Besides the shortness of the term of office of the deputies was a reason for the summoning of an Assembly whenever new ones were to be elected. Therefore the Protestants wanted frequent changes and for the same reason the king's Council desired a longer period of service. Moreover the Protestants desired the king to accept the deputies of their choice.²

¹ Benoit, 1: 245; Haag, 2: 184.

² Benoit, 1. 368-9.

As a solution of the difficulty, the provincial Synod of Poitou had promised that if a new Assembly were granted the question would be settled in a manner agreeable to Henry. The Assembly did in fact nominate six persons, including in the number the two, Villarnoul and Mirande, already designated by the Synod of La Rochelle, whose nomination Henry had declined to ratify, but it refused to disperse or to consider its business settled until it learned the intentions of the king. The firmness of its attitude influenced Sully to advise the king to accede to its requests. This the king did gracefully, choosing, to the great satisfaction of the Protestants, those two persons who had been already twice nominated.

These Assemblies did not stop with the peculiar business for which they had been called, namely, the nomination of deputies. Much other business was transacted touching the general welfare of the Churches. No sooner had the first of them, that of Sainte-Foi, concluded its deliberations on the office of the deputies-general, than it proceeded to the political re-organization of the party. It revived the provincial Assemblies or Councils, which, with the General Assembly as political bodies, had been suppressed by the Edict of Nantes.

These Provincial Councils had been first erected in 1594 when the reformers began to suspect that their hope for the new and promised Edict was entirely illusory. "They were to correspond to the General Assembly. Each in its own resort was to possess the same authority as the General

Assembly exercised over the whole realm. Their special function would be to collect, arrange and transmit opinions and memoranda; to encourage harmony among the nobles and to accommodate their differences; to assess the sums necessary for the common cause; to have an eye to the garrisons, conditions and munitions of the surety-towns." The Provincial Council was not to replace the Provincial Assembly but to be a kind of permanent committee giving effect to the legislation of the latter. It was to consist of only five members. Formal meetings were to be held when the provincial synod was in session. Two members from this body were to be invited to its deliberations. Benoit states that in 1605, at Châtellerault, Sully persuaded the deputies not to persist in their project of erecting these Councils everywhere. However that may be, it appears that the provinces were not as ardent in re-organization as the Consistoriaux of the General Assembly desired, for the Assembly of Jargeau in 1608 is found urging those provinces that had not yet complied in this respect with the orders of the Sainte-Foi Assembly to do so with the least possible delay.

Following the custom of their predecessors these Assemblies further departed from the conditions of their convocation in drawing up Bills of Grievances. The Bill of 1601 shows clearly how widespread was the opposition to the Edict of Nantes among Catholics and through what difficulties the Protestants came to the enjoyment of their newly found privileges. It reveals also the reason for the Protestant attitude. A comparison

of this cahier with those of succeeding years bears eloquent testimony however to the good faith of Henry in executing his decree and enforcing its provisions. In 1601 scarcely an article of the Edict but was being constantly violated in various parts of the kingdom. In 1607 scarcely a complaint.

It is well worth while to enquire into the contents of these bills to see just what difficulties the Edict surmounted under the benign administration of Henry; for these very obstacles arise again and again until, the administration of a sympathetic prince having given place to that of one hostile to the Edict's principles, they became the very media of its overthrow.

The initial demand made by the Protestants was that the Edict should be restored to its early form as agreed between Henry and the Assembly of Châtellerault. This demand was renewed at almost every subsequent Assembly, except when in 1605 it was suppressed in consequence of the royal displeasure as expressed through the mouth of the Commissioner, although Protestants alleged Henry's promise to restore the Edict. The request was of course refused on the ground that not only had no changes of vital importance been introduced into the decree, but that such changes as had been introduced had received the sanction of the Protestants, which was so far true that it had been approved by certain of the nobles.

More important were the complaints: (1) That right of domicile was refused to Protestants in certain cities; (2) That the governors of various provinces had suspended Protestant worship with-

out investigation; (3) That the building of churches had been interfered with even in places where Protestants possessed rights of worship; (4) That cemeteries had not been provided for them, burials had been forbidden during daylight, everywhere bodies were being disinterred; (5) That Protestants were nowhere treated with respect; their houses were marked with sinister intention; their ministers were abusively taxed; they were disturbed wherever they gathered together; they were subjected to every kind of indignity and humiliation; those who thus insulted them in word and deed, acted with absolute impunity; and other public and perhaps petty but disturbing annoyances; (6) That admission to Catholic colleges was refused to teachers and students; almshouses were closed against the Protestant poor; ministers were not allowed to visit prisons for the consolation of those that were ill or condemned to death; workingmen were shut out of the guilds; (7) That their equal right of enjoyment of offices was constantly denied them; (8) That the parlements used every effort to reduce the importance and to destroy the independence of the *chambres de l'édit*; that the southern provinces suffered from the violence of the Parlements of Toulouse, Bordeaux and Grenoble, and that the king himself had been the first to override the jurisdiction of these courts, first when he refused to allow the Chamber at Castres to take cognizance of the crimes of the duc de Bouillon, and later when he erected the Court of the Grands Jours in the resorts of the Parlements of Paris, Toulouse and Bordeaux; (9) That they had been unjustly deprived

of Montélimart, Pons, Vezins and Vitré as surety-towns, and of a considerable part of the sums promised for the upkeep of those towns. (10) That the irregularity in the payment of the royal grant for the support of ministers and garrisons threw them into great financial embarrassment and caused even public disturbance.

To these demands Henry replied in general with the utmost liberality. "In all his replies there was a spirit of good-will and equity which revealed plainly the secret intention of the king and showed clearly that he wished without reserve or ambiguity that the Edict should be observed and that the difficulties which arose in the execution of it should be interpreted favourably". He ordered that the Edict should be registered in all parlements, that Protestants should enjoy complete freedom of residence, free from molestation; that their books should not be burned, that their poor should have admittance to almshouses, and that cemeteries should be provided without delay. He instructed the Commissioners and executors of the Edict to put a wide interpretation upon Article 10 of the Edict of Nantes, so that the right of worship was conceded not on the absurd condition that service had been held on Tuesday, September 17, but at any time during that winter. Protestants were allowed to retain their rights of public worship in those places granted them by the edict of 1577, even though they were ecclesiastical holdings.

It was not to be supposed, however, that liberal as Henry's intentions might be, his instructions became immediately effective. As we have seen,

the Edict was not registered by the Parlement of Normandy until 1609. In the Bourbonnais the Protestants received no cemetery until 1612. In such cases the dead were buried in gardens, fields, almshouse yards, and elsewhere. Sometimes the Catholics shared their cemetery with the Protestants. Certain provinces refused to carry out the Edict in spite of frequent expeditions of the Commissioners. Offices were constantly and everywhere refused to the Protestants. Indeed Henry never insisted on anything more than that occupants of offices should not be deprived. Furthermore, Henry never made up the arrearage of his annual grant, which amounted to large sums, and never restored to protestantism those surety-towns which from time to time he took from them. At the request of a General Assembly of the Clergy, he decided: (1) that when an ecclesiastic became a Protestant, a suit against him should be instituted forthwith, on the strange ground that only a guilty priest could want to change religion; (2) that Protestants should not be interred in Catholic Churches, or in monasteries, even if they were patrons of the same; (3) that "temples" should always be erected at a considerable distance from the churches; (4) that every schoolmaster, tutor, or regent must be approved by the curé before being employed in a town.

In these and various other ways in his interpretation of the Edict, Henry showed that his mind had remained the same. He had no desire for the extension of protestantism. He longed rather, and did not conceal his longing for its gradual and

pacific extinction. But he was at least as wise in practical politics as were the great political writers of his generation and as Montesquieu at a later day in the theory of government. Protestants existed in his dominions in large numbers. He provided for their control and protection by an Edict. The terms of that Edict he interpreted in a spirit of understanding and generosity. Gradually then under this treatment the grievances of the Protestants were wiped out and through their veins contentment flowed like an elixir.

CHAPTER IV

PROTESTANT ALARM AND THE ASSEMBLY OF SAUMUR

The assassination of Henry seemed to throw the whole question again into the melting pot, and precipitated a climax in the affairs of protestantism. To the more ardent spirits this shocking deed brought absolute dismay. For them the Edict of Nantes was the "bulwark" of liberty, and Henry, in spite of his Roman pandering, was the great Defender of the Faith. "In losing him they lost everything." His death was their eclipse. Doubts and suspicions filled their minds. The Jesuits, they thought, were responsible for this last and successful attempt on the King's life. Everybody suspected the Jesuits of being accomplices. Only the Protestants openly accused them of being the murderers. The tardiness of the Queen-Regent and of the Courts in the investigation of his murder they regarded as evidence of complicity. The well known and natural subjection of the queen to Italian and Spanish influences and her active prosecution of the Spanish marriages became an unmistakable sign of the attempt to extinguish protestantism, of which the increased boldness of Catholic preachers was too plain a confirmation. Their imaginations became overheated. Seized with an increasing alarm they advocated the adoption of radical measures for the protection of the churches. Civil war seemed unavoidable.

Some retired to their estates awaiting destiny. A second Saint Bartholomew seemed imminent.

There were a certain number of Huguenots, however, who were not moved by such sentiments. They were the lukewarm and the indifferent. No religious passion animated them. They were absorbed in business and averse from agitation. Many of them were actively hostile to the methods of the "consistoriaux" or fanatical set. They had not given any ardent support to earlier Assemblies in their demands for the enactment of the Edict and were quite satisfied with the Edict as verified by the parlements. They had always deprecated any measure that tended to embitter the inevitable antagonism between Catholic and Protestant. Such interest as they had manifested had been on a basis of union for the two religions, an activity deemed pernicious by the bigoted and visited by their bitterest censure. A decade of peace with growing prosperity had entrenched these moderates in their position. For them the benefits of the Edict had proved largely illusory, more spurious than real. Even under Henry's comparatively scrupulous administration, the disabilities they suffered were more evident than the advantages they enjoyed. Social ostracism and political emasculation were too heavy a price to pay for the speculative rewards corollary to the profession of an austere Puritan faith. They preferred rather to sink religious differences in the enjoyment of the pleasures of society than to endure affliction with a people who, shut off from the amenities of public and social life, became more and more in-

volved in ecclesiastical, ritualistic and theological inanities. For such as these, Henry's death spelled opportunity rather than disaster.

The reaction that had long ago set in within protestantism itself was now coming to a head. Henry's prophetic words were about to be verified.

If, said he, they take advantage of my goodness, it is with the idea that because they afforded me an asylum in my greatest necessities, I shall not make up my mind to do them hurt. But it is just this that will bring about their ruin, for, growing accustomed to that idea, they will act in the same manner with my son, who, not being actuated by like sentiments, will not tolerate them but will destroy them.

The natural result was the renewal of the religious wars, and ultimately the destruction of every vestige of political solidarity.

These conflicting forces were sharply divided at the Assembly of Saumur in 1611. This Assembly had been grudgingly sanctioned by the Queen-Regent on the condition that it should confine itself to the nomination of deputies in the place of those whose term of service had about expired, and immediately dissolve. The futility of such a condition was obvious and had been proven more than once during the reign of the late king. The election of deputies-general involved a discussion of the whole political situation of the Huguenots: a discussion of the past, as presented in the report of the outgoing deputies, and of the future as involved in the instructions to the new officers. It was for this very purpose, for the consideration of necessary measures to be taken in view of the unusual circumstances produced by the assassination of the king, that permission for an Assembly

General had been requested. The principle underlying their demand for convocation was in direct opposition to the conditions under which this convention was permitted. The election of the deputies, then, although the first order of the day, was no more than a pretext. Delegates designated by the provincial Assemblies between February and April came from the fifteen Protestant provinces bringing their cahiers of grievances, largely in line with the suggestions previously forwarded to those Assemblies by Du Plessis-Mornay and Bouillon. They brought also their apprehensiveness and mistrust. The Assembly lasted from May 22 to September 12.

This was the most brilliant gathering of the kind that the Huguenots had ever seen. The interest and anxiety of Catholic and Protestant alike were centred for the moment in Saumur. "The holding of this Assembly gave matter for talk in all the towns of France, for never had such an one been seen, or one in which sat so many dukes and great lords of that religion, and that too during the minority of a king." In it sat eighty-one deputies exclusive of the two deputies-general, who were necessarily in attendance. Of these about one-half were noblemen. Ministers and elders in almost equal numbers constituted the remainder.

Of the "Grands Seigneurs", the duc de Bouillon, the duc de Sully, the duc de la Force, the duc de la Trémouille were not delegates and held no commissions, but they took part in the proceedings by special request. Lesdiguières had also been invited but excused himself with expressions of

loyal sympathy. "Their presence was, however, more harmful than helpful."

Bouillon was the first figure in Protestantism; next to him stood Sully. Each had his followers, and the Assembly was soon rent by their rival claims. Bouillon was sold to the Court, and as its emissary employed every subterfuge to embarrass his co-religionists and to thwart the will of the majority of the Assembly. He detested Sully as the chief instrument of his disgrace (1606) by Henry IV and in spite of an apparent reconciliation, exercised all his influence to restrain the Assembly from adopting the quarrel of the deposed Minister of Finance. Sully, on the other hand, embittered by his humiliation at the hands of the regent, and anxious for the support of the Assembly became, by interest and inclination, as well as by his position, the head and front of the opposition to Bouillon and the Court faction. The Assembly succeeded in check-mating the duc de Bouillon, but only at the expense of any substantive decision on its own part. Through his personal influence and by direct corruption, material for which had been plentifully supplied by the Court, Bouillon obtained a following, about twenty-five, which, while too small to bend the Assembly completely to the will of the queen, was nevertheless large enough to sow discord within it and to destroy any unanimity of action.

On the very first day of the session, the factional character of the Assembly emerged. Bouillon and the duc de Rohan, Sully's son-in-law, presented themselves as candidates for the presidency.

The choice of the Assembly fell, however, neither upon the youthful, romantic and attractive Rohan, nor upon the proud, arch-intriguer Bouillon, who had undertaken for the advantage of the Court to have himself elected, but upon the duc du Plessis-Mornay, the Nestor of French protestantism. Thereupon Bouillon, who had first announced that he would be a candidate and later had altered his decision, retired to his apartments in mighty dudgeon, like Achilles to his tent, and announced his immediate intention of wiping the dust of Saumur from his feet. He failed to carry out his threat, however, having been persuaded that his own interest and that of the Church demanded his presence, the first consideration being undoubtedly real although the last proved to be ill-founded.

The question of the presidency disposed of, the old dispute over the nomination of the deputies-general was renewed. Should the Assembly designate six persons, from whom the Crown might choose two, or should it stand upon its supposed rights of direct nomination? The Crown insisted upon the first. The Assembly decided for the second. The Crown had one instrument of retaliation which it might use, fully apprised as it was of the discord, and having thorough confidence in Bouillon. It would refuse its reply to the petition of grievances until after the nomination of the deputies and the adjournment of the Assembly. On the other hand, the Assembly refused to proceed to the business of nomination before it had received the reply of the Crown to its cahier, for

with the nomination of deputies its business was concluded. This was the only weapon in the hands of the Assembly, and a poor enough weapon it was, save for the fact that it was employed by a political body capable, if united, in case of necessity, of putting into the field a force of 50,000 men.

This was on August 16. On August 20 a circular was sent to the provinces advising them of the situation. The reply of the Assembly to the threat of the Commissioners was characteristic. After the customary protestations of loyalty, it asserted its zeal for the welfare of the king and nation, declared that the Protestants were "ready to sacrifice their last drop of blood and their last breath in the service of his Majesty" but insisted that what they asked was essential to their preservation and therefore their appeal must now be to the king. As they proceeded to the appointment of a deputation for this purpose, divisions appeared again. Bouillon was accused of intriguing to fill the deputation with his creatures. In consequence the deputation was shorn of plenary power and ordered to commit itself to nothing without having first communicated with the synod. On the other hand, the deputies were ordered to remain in Paris until satisfaction should have been received, or until they were instructed to leave. Satisfaction was not received. The Court persisted in its determination to concede nothing and warned the deputies that they would be forced to leave Paris on July 28, a reply to their cahier having been placed in the hands of Bullion, one of the royal Commissioners.

The Commission having made its report through the Minister Ferrier, at that moment on the eve of apostasy, Bullion appeared with the long waited document in his possession. He declared, on the pain of "eternal damnation", that the regent's concessions would not disappoint the most sanguine, but that the reply must be withheld until the Assembly had obeyed the king's commands. He pointed out, as he had done before, that the Assembly was a menace to the tranquillity of the kingdom, that it would have been more seemly, considering the state of affairs, if they had deferred their meeting to another time, and that their persistent stubbornness would give great umbrage to the Catholics.

These statements by Bullion served no other purpose than to elicit further remonstrances from the Assembly to the queen, re-affirming their position and pointing out that in thus contesting the justice of her commands, they were not only following precedent, but were pursuing the only course open to them, since they must perforce carry out the instructions of their electors, to whom they were responsible and who would misinterpret any disposition on their part to yield to contrary orders from the Court.

Bouillon deemed the moment come for the playing of his trump card. He played it. The dead-lock was broken. The queen was triumphant. Only the consummate tact and the personal prestige of Du Plessis-Mornay saved the Protestant body from disaster. Finding itself suddenly outwitted by Bouillon and the minority, the majority,

by a swift change of tactics, aligned itself with the minority, and so prevented an irreparable schism. The best that could be said was, that though defeated and humiliated, protestantism remained formidable. The queen had found its vulnerable spot but she still respected it. Bouillon had played his part, and played it well, but domination over the Assembly had escaped him and the humiliated queen refused him the promised governorship of Poitou.

The facts seem to be these. A letter from the Regent was put into the hands of Bullion (dated August 27) which the latter communicated first to a few of the Protestants, then to Du Plessis-Mornay, Bouillon and La Force. Rohan declares that this letter was drafted by Bouillon and by him sent to the queen. Richelieu alleges that Bouillon inspired it. Bellujon, representative of Lesdiguières at the Assembly, and the bearer of the letter, admitted that he went to the Court by command of the duc de Bouillon. Moreover, it was the cabal of Bouillon that diverted from Bellujon the severe censures to which the Assembly proposed to subject him. This letter then informed the Assembly that, as a proof of her favourable disposition, the queen had given her reply to the petition of grievances, although the Assembly had not yet made its nominations for deputies-general. It stated that the reply would be laid before the Assembly as soon as the Assembly had complied with this condition. Furthermore, she conceded to the Assembly the right of continuing its sitting for the consideration of her replies and of incor-

porating their further remonstrances in the instructions to the new deputies. "But", she added, "inasmuch as we have been informed that all of the deputies of which the Assembly is made up, approve neither of the obstinacy and disobedience nor of the aims of the instigators of the refusal, we on behalf of the king, enjoin upon those of them who desire to obey the present ordinance, to proceed of themselves to the nomination of six deputies, to receive the cahier from the hands of the duc de Bullion and afterwards to separate and withdraw to their respective provinces."

Had not Du Plessis-Mornay and La Force already imparted privately to their supporters the tenor of this treacherous letter, chaos would have destroyed the Assembly. As it was, this body had decided that the only way to avoid the humiliation of scandalous dissension was to rob the Bouillon faction of its advantage by obedience to the queen's command. This agreement was kept perfectly secret. Accordingly, after the 3rd of September, when Bullion read the letter to the Assembly, it was the turn of Bouillon and his henchmen to be thrown into consternation through the prompt announcement by the President that the deputies were unanimous in their decision to bow to the king's will. Bouillon saw himself outwitted. He displayed his chagrin by upbraiding his followers for their lack of courage and by his own refusal to act on the committee appointed to nominate candidates.

The satisfaction of the Court was announced by Bullion and testified to by the extension of the

time of retention of the surety-towns for another five years, by the increase of the annual grant for ministerial support by 45,000 livres, by the promise of a Commission of inquiry into alleged infractions of the Edict, by the promise of a prompt reply to the cahier and by permission granted to the Assembly to continue in session until the instructions to the new deputies-general should have been decided upon.*

On the 5th the nominations made from adversaries of Bouillon, had been transmitted to the Court. On the 6th the Assembly determined to make no remarks upon the unsatisfactory nature of the queen's replies to their cahier, at which they were much irritated, but to pass the replies on to the Provincial Assemblies for their consideration.

On the 12th, Rouvray and La Milletière having been selected as deputies-general, the Assembly dissolved. "Thus an Assembly made up of the most distinguished of the Protestants, both as to rank and ability, whose business it should have been by availing themselves of the most opportune moment to provide sureties for their churches which their enemies could never be able to violate, separated without accomplishing anything."

The queen had achieved her purpose. One of her first efforts as Regent had been to make friends of the Protestants and to allay the fears which disquieted them. To that end she had sent agents into the provinces to assure them that her intention was to continue the exact observance of the edicts. She conveyed the same message to the Protestants

generally through Du Plessis-Mornay. Eight days after Henry's death she had confirmed the Edict; she had ordered the registration, publication and observation of the *articles secrets*. She had given favourable replies to cahiers presented by the deputies-general on behalf of a few isolated churches. She had granted permission for the Assembly. She had renewed the alliances with the Protestant powers. By such acts she hoped to convince them that her intentions were entirely pacific and that no interruption would occur in Henry's policy toward them. Upon the various provincial parlements she impressed the desirability of abandoning animosities and encouraging good feeling. And, however disaffected towards the Protestants some of these may have been, they succeeded in making the law respected where it had before received slight courtesy. This determination on the part of the queen to carry out the policy of the late king in regard to his Protestant subjects, was all the more difficult and remarkable because she was obliged to oppose the insistent demands of the Pope for the utter extinction of heresy.

The Protestants had not been moved, and, disappointed in her efforts to win their friendship, Marie had found a better way to peace. She made them innocuous by dividing them against themselves. For the time being, she had nothing to fear from the Huguenots and could turn her attention to her favourite ambitions.

At the same time the Huguenots calculated to make themselves more formidable than ever.

During the intervals in their dispute with the Commissioners over the appointment of deputies they had taken up the question of their political constitution. The organization of the party as made by the Assemblies of Sainte-Foi and Jargeau (1594, 1601, 1608) into Provincial Councils, Provincial Assemblies, and General Assembly, was confirmed. Only slight modifications were introduced into the constitution of these bodies. Provincial councillors should be appointed for two years only: there should be a Council in each province: a General Assembly should be held every two years; to which each province should elect at least three deputies, at most five. But a great strengthening of their effectiveness was contemplated in the authorization of each provincial council to summon to its deliberations, representatives of at least three neighbouring provinces, "in case of any unusual breach of the Edict, sedition, tumult, crime or other striking outrage". This new council was popularly known as the "Cercle". It was conceived as standing midway between the Provincial and General Assemblies, strengthening the former, relieving the latter and contributing greatly by the promptness with which it could act to the energy and prestige, as well as to the menace of the Huguenot system. "These resolutions", says Benoit "would have made the reformers invincible, had it been as easy to carry them out as to draw them up." The effectiveness of the "Cercle" was soon to be tested. In the meantime lack of unanimity among the Protestants led to the refusal on the part of certain provinces, notably La

Rochelle and Lower Languedoc, to obey the orders of the Assembly in regard to political re-organization.

The refusal of the Assembly to discuss the replies to the "Cahier" was a confession of impotency. The replies were transmitted to the Provincial Assemblies, in the belief that the latter would deal with them promptly and effectively, unhampered by Court influences.

Such a step might well alarm the Regent. She had corrupted and defeated the Assembly, but the mass of Protestant opinion remained beyond her power of contamination. It was now a question of how far protestantism as a whole sympathized with the uncompromising attitude of the *exaltés* of the Assembly.

The deputies, as they retired to their homes, roused their constituencies to keen resentment against the Court "for denying them freedom of discussion, and against the Bouillon faction for betraying them". This exasperation so impressed the queen that commissioners were hastily dispatched into all the provinces for the redressing of grievances and the execution of the replies to the "Cahiers", and the discouragement of the holding of Provincial Assemblies. Feeling among Protestants ran so high, however, that not only were the commissioners unable to induce the provinces to abandon their projected Assemblies, but many of the Provinces refused even to receive the commissioners. Furthermore, having taken the oath of union after the example of Saumur, they prepared to lay their demands at the foot of the throne through special deputies.

Despite a warning from the government that such deputations would be highly unwelcome, sixteen or seventeen delegates from the provincial Assemblies arrived in Paris about the middle of January. Even now, however, it was apparent that there was far from unanimity among the Protestants, for these deputies represented, at the most, slightly more than half the number of provinces (La Rochelle, Poitou, Saintonge, Guyenne, Languedoc, Anjou, Bretagne, Berri). On the other hand, five more provinces forwarded each a cahier (Lower Languedoc, Provence, Dauphiny, Vivarais and Burgundy) which lent additional weight to the protest and must have proved to the Court that Protestant solidarity was not entirely destroyed.

The deputies were met by the chancellor on the nineteenth of the month, who upbraided them for having held Assemblies without permission, and ordered them to present their demands through the deputies-general, the only legitimate channel of communication between the Crown and the churches. No cognizance was taken of the action of the delegates or of the bodies they represented. They were abruptly ordered to retire from the city. The cahiers were received as from the deputies-general and the replies sent to the latter.

The cahiers themselves traversed practically the same ground as those of Saumur, and the replies were in no sense more satisfactory to the petitioners.

The proceedings of the Huguenots can only be interpreted in one way. They seemed to consider their situation as in the last degree serious. Pre-

cautions were being taken against the worst possible emergencies. Suspicions might well have been aroused by the Catholic sympathizers of the queen, but her own actions had given cause for gratitude rather than for complaint. These emergencies did not exist, or existed for the more part only in inflamed imaginations. As has been shown, the queen in spite of Catholic sympathies and her determination to carry out a Catholic policy, was quite conscious of the danger of arousing Huguenot passion, and was exerting every effort by imitating the policy of Henry to disarm Protestant suspicions without in the least depriving them of the guarantees which they held in their own hands. Indeed, she went further and increased their resources by 45,000 livres, in addition to the 45,000 crowns paid under the arrangement with Henry IV. In spite of evidence of friction always existing between them and the Catholic population, for which the difficulty of executing the edict was largely responsible, but for which Protestant heat was often responsible also, they seem to have been just now in a more advantageous position than ever. Hence, in the opinion of the Court, they were doing what Henry had prophesied they would do. They were taking advantage of the minority of the King. Deep resentment was stirred up among the Catholics which recalled the passions of ante-edict days.

It is difficult to deny the justice of the remark of Richelieu that "they were attempting to fish in troubled waters". Fresh grievances they had none. The replies to the cahier were as fair as could have been expected. The requests that had just been

refused by Louis had been refused over and over again by Henry. To have granted them would have been to make a new edict. To insist upon such emendations was to subvert law and order, to renew the Wars of Religion. The declaration of certain of the delegates in open Assembly directly fomented trouble. The Protestants were supposed to have at their disposal large resources of men and money and, had there been unanimity in the Assembly, war would have been almost inevitable.

The answer of the court to this situation was given in a declaration of April 24 ensuing. This answer was milder than might have been expected, under the circumstances, but its very mildness and paternalism exasperated the Protestants. It set forth that although everything possible had been done to allay the apprehensiveness of the reformers, they had arrogated to themselves the liberty of holding political assemblies for which the consent of the crown should first have been obtained, thereby giving umbrage to the Catholic subjects of the king. In consequence of this action the crown, pursuant to the terms of the Edict and to the commands of Henry IV, again forbade all future assemblies of a political nature, and granted a full pardon to those guilty of a breach of the Edict in convoking and attending the above illicit gatherings. Complete acknowledgement was made of their right under the Edict to meet for ecclesiastical business in consistories, colloques, provincial or national synods.

Great was the indignation of the Protestants. They sorrowfully repudiated the imputation im-

plied. Amnesty had been granted for misdemeanors that had never been committed. This decree was an insult of the gravest kind, calculated to misrepresent them at home and abroad.

The Churches could not remain insensible to a dishonour of this nature they were penetrated by a most just resentment at seeing themselves blackened by such a reproach touching their provincial assemblies No member of their body had been guilty of the imaginary crimes imputed to them; they were prepared severally and individually to answer for their actions and to publish them throughout the world and to display them under the fullest light at the risk of all kinds of torments, easier to endure than such a shameful and infamous reproach They were unwilling, furthermore, to avail themselves in any way of the letters of amnesty. If any among them had accepted them or had urged that they be accepted, those persons should be disowned. This last because the court declared that these letters had been issued at the request of certain Protestants who, implicated in these Assemblies, feared prosecution, an evidently biased palliation.

Such was the protest made by the National Synod which opened its session at Privas on May 23 in this year. This synod was, from the point of view of its political activities, of almost as great importance as a General Assembly. Its temper may be judged by the fact that Chamier was Moderator and Du Moulin his adjoint an *exalté*, both *fous du Synode*. In respect of the Declaration of April, it was made indeed to do the duty of a Political Assembly for which the Church had vainly petitioned. It applied itself to the healing of those party divisions which had made such havoc in the proceedings of Saumur. Precautions were taken against the admission of any persons who were not duly authorized delegates, for fear

the Moderatorship might fall into the hands of a cabal. The schismatics of Saumur were severely censured. The Oath of Union was solemnly administered to each delegate under promise to administer it to their own churches. "Intrigues, cabals and unions" which had become common in the Provincial Assembly were ordered to cease on pain of suspension of the officers of the same.

The synod finally made itself a political mouth-piece in renewing, through the deputies-general, their objections to the replies made to the much-worn recent cahiers and in reiterating the demands made therein, to which replies had already been given twice during the past six months, namely, those in regard to the objectionable phrase, *prétendue réformée* and the parochial schools, in pointing out that the work of the Commissioners, except perhaps in regard to cemeteries, had been rather detrimental than otherwise, and in demanding the withdrawal of the Lettres d'Amnestie. To the same end commissioners were appointed to superintend the execution of the orders of the Political Assembly in those provinces that had refused to establish provincial councils or had otherwise contravened the commands of the Assembly. The realm was finally divided into sixteen permanent provinces, including Béarn. Serious attempts were made to remove dissensions in individual churches, where the *complaisants* and the *zélés* were at loggerheads. Ministers who agreed but ill were separated and put into more congenial surroundings. Judges in the *chambres de l'édit* and in the parlements were reproved for

not having made a more vigorous resistance to the registration of the edict of Amnesty. The deputies-general were ordered to oppose the machinations of any Protestants who made special appeal to the court not in the general interest of the churches, and to give information to the churches concerning the same. The incorrigible Ferrier was excommunicated at this synod because of his contumacious example. Theological professors were made ineligible henceforth for membership in political assemblies. Finally, an "extraordinary fast was decreed to be observed by all the churches on account of the increasing looseness of living among us and the shameful divisions among the churches".

Of all these divisions and signs of discord the synod agreed to make an end. Therefore it drew up a special Act of Union and of Peace and appointed a committee to work jointly with the deputies-general for the reconciliation of persons and factions. For the speedier attainment of this purpose, letters in this spirit were sent by the Assembly to the great nobles of the party, Bouillon, Lesdiguières, Rohan, Sully, Soubise, La Force and Du Plessis-Mornay, "exhorting them that for their part they should divest themselves of all animosities, and forgetting their private rancours and dissatisfaction, continue to show their affection and zeal for the welfare and repose of the churches by restoring cordial relations with each other, that, thus strongly united in bonds of perfect love, all may work together for the advancement of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ". The Synod of

Tonneins later (1614) thanked the committee for its labours and "relieved them of their commission with the honour that their diligence had merited". Their success was, however, very short-lived.

The acts of the synod were noteworthy for their scrutiny of the condition of the society from doctrinal and ethical points of view, the injunction to ministers and their families to set an example of modesty in their apparel, and the decision to administer the sacrament to persons condemned to death. Provinces were enjoined to keep diligent watch over those pastors who did not present sound doctrine. A formula directed against Piscatorian heresy was drawn up for signature by future candidates for the ministry.

To all of which the Court replied only by a second declaration, dated July 11, aiming to allay the irritation caused by the former decree. It set forth that

while the Letters of Amnesty had been granted only at the instance and supplication of certain individuals of the said religion who feared prosecution for having been found in Assemblies held without our permission, and having done subsequently other acts, as among others the enrolment of soldiers, yet this favour had been taken by others of the said religion as a desire to put a stigma upon the great body of them, in consequence of which as a necessary explanation of the content of our said letters, we declare that we are well satisfied with our subjects of the Reformed Protestant Religion, and therefore wish to forget what may have been committed by certain among them to the prejudice of the Edict, and desire that nothing be laid to their charge, nor that any blame or stigma attach to them in the future in this respect provided they persist in their duty, obedience and fidelity towards us and observe the laws, edicts and ordinances enacted for the material peace, repose and amity of our subjects.

From the heated condition of men's minds and the animosities engendered by the bitter opposition of Saumur, arose also certain local complications, which not only taxed the patience of Crown and moderate protestantism alike, but for a moment threw across the land the shadows of civil war.

After the apostasy of Henry of Navarre, the most important figure among the reformers was the duc de Bouillon. His only rival was Sully; but Sully had lost his influence by the action of the court and was a broken man. His reputation as a captain and a diplomatist, in addition to his name, gave him an undisputed ascendancy in his party. Had Henry not discouraged or practically forbidden the election of a protector after his accession to the throne, that office would probably have been continued in Bouillon, by virtue of his social position and his commanding abilities.

In the meantime the Protestants had been weaned from thought of their former titular leadership by their confidence in Henry as well as by the compromising acts of Bouillon himself. Bouillon's continued prestige with the Protestants may be judged, however, by the fact that immediately after Henry's death he stepped into his position as their natural leader, and that, in spite of his intrigues and duplicity, he had, before his death in 1623, recovered all his former ascendancy. As president of the Assembly of Saumur all men thought first of Bouillon. It was his indiscreet friendship for the court that ousted him from a post which seemed rightfully his, which personal ambition led him to covet but which cupidity lost.

In the conflict of rival claims for that office, the safe and sage Du Plessis-Mornay won the honours. But Du Plessis was not a great leader. The real hero of the Assembly and of the Protestants began soon to emerge from its atmosphere of jealousy and ambition and intrigue. Unknown to the majority of the Protestants, save that he bore an illustrious name, he distinguished himself at once by his ardour, his sincere and persuasive passion, his uncompromising enthusiasm, his fiery eloquence, his youth. It was the duc de Rohan, then thirty-two years of age, who had entered the lists as the champion of the Protestant cause. It was he who renewed its fleeting political ambitions, who blew upon the embers of its hope and fought its battles, only to be broken finally by its apathy, a heroic, tempestuous and romantic figure.

Rohan and Bouillon led the antagonistic factions in protestantism. They were opposed on practically every question of a political nature that presented itself to the Assembly. Their mutual hostility, combined with the influence of Bouillon at court, provoked an attempt on the part of the latter to destroy the power of Rohan. It is not without vanity that the latter attributes to this hostility of Bouillon towards himself the renaissance of Protestant wars and divisions. Upon Rohan was now thrown the responsibility for the obstinacy of the Assembly, as well as for the holding of the unauthorized Provincial Assemblies. To punish him, therefore, the court decided to destroy his influence in the town of St. Jean d'Angéli, of which he was governor. If this had been accomplished

it would have been not merely a humiliation to Rohan, but would have been in addition a severe blow to Protestant prestige, since this city was an outpost of La Rochelle itself.

There being no citadel in St. Jean, the keys of the city were in the hands of the Mayor. It was of the greatest importance then that the court should have an officer there amenable to its influence. Such a person was the existing magistrate. His term of office was, however, just expiring, and according to the statutes he could not be re-elected. The regent attempted to set aside the statutes and to cause his re-election.

Having an inkling of the designs of the court, Rohan hastened from Brittany, where he was in attendance upon the Estates, to St. Jean and gathered his adherents about him. La Roche-beaucourt, the king's lieutenant in the city, who was absent at the time of Rohan's arrival, deemed discretion the better part of valour, and instead of trying to re-enter, hastened to apprise the King of the situation. Rohan debauched the king's messenger and then accompanied him to court where he tried to defend his attitude on this occasion and his conduct at Saumur.

Rohan's attempts at justification of his whole conduct here, as at Saumur, having fallen upon deaf ears, he defied the reiterated commands of the regent. Thereupon his messengers were imprisoned, his wife, mother and sisters put under surveillance, and his pension stopped. Quick to scent religious passion at the root of such actions, Rohan advised the Churches that he was fighting

their battles, that they stood or fell together. Then he convoked a Cercle to meet in La Rochelle, September 26. The moment was at hand for testing the efficiency of the new organization. All of the neighbouring provinces responded, Poitou, Saintonge, Anjou, Guyenne, La Rochelle and Bretagne.

The regent forbade the meeting and rejected Protestant attempts at reconciliation. When she found that her prohibition was unheeded, she dispatched an agent, du Coudray, to La Rochelle to keep an eye on the actions of the Cercle. Du Coudray roused the anger of the citizens and, after two riots, was driven out of the city. The determined attitude of the Cercle, which yielded only on the 20th of November, forced the court to a consideration of its demands. It charged Du Plessis-Mornay and Rouvray, one of the deputies-general, with negotiations and a settlement was reached upon a basis embodied in a Declaration of January, 1613 (Dec. 15) which saved appearances for the Crown but yielded every point to Rohan.

A certain number of the members of the Cercle were intent, however, upon war, and persisted in prolonging the Assembly. Thereupon the delegates from Anjou and from La Rochelle withdrew. Unfortunately Rohan sided with the chauvinistic element and the situation took on a serious aspect. Only the earnest instances of the city council and the knowledge that they had lost the confidence of the churches, prevented the adoption of extreme measures. The deputies then "fearing for their

skins" announced to the court their dissolution, but they were careful not to leave La Rochelle until after the declaration had been registered by all the parlements.

"This Assembly", says Rohan naïvely enough, "was more fruitful for the public good and for the duc de Rohan than the General Assembly of Saumur."

CHAPTER V

THE ALLIANCE WITH CONDÉ

The commotion that filled the kingdom between the dissolution of the Cercle of La Rochelle and the meeting of the Estates General in 1614 caused by the intrigues of Condé concerned the Protestants but remotely. Not, indeed, that they were without interest in the abuses which Condé proposed to correct. Some of their number were deeply involved with the malcontents. Bouillon, true to character, was plotting and counter-plotting for his personal advantage. Rohan, knowing too well the corrupt ambitions of the discontented princes, held aloof listening and waiting, hoping apparently that he would become indispensable to them. To this end he influenced the Council of Lower Guyenne to summon a General Assembly at Tonneins, where the National Synod was about to meet. Du Plessis-Mornay, on the other hand, was exerting every effort to restrain the Protestants from embroiling themselves anew in questions that were in no sense religious. While urging the regent to allay the irritation of his co-religionists over the continued violation of the edicts and the non-fulfilment of the recent pledges,¹ he supported the

¹ Concerning the exemption of ministers from the *taille*, the suppression of the word *prétendue* in designating the Protestant religion.

latter in their demand for another General Assembly to be convened without delay.¹

For once saner councils prevailed and Du Plessis was obeyed. Even ecclesiastical protestantism dropped for the time its proud impatience. Everywhere Protestants vied with Catholics in demonstrations of loyalty. To the young king as on coming to his majority he made a royal progress through the provinces, they gave an enthusiastic welcome. The surety-towns threw open their gates before him and turned out their garrisons. The Synod of Tonneins censured the Council of Guyenne for summoning an Assembly without sufficient cause. A letter on doctrinal questions from James of England to the same synod was sent to the king before being opened that the synod by this precaution might be discharged of all suspicion of treasonous communications.

This pacific disposition on the part of the Protestants seems to have been stimulated by the hope that the king would redeem his oft repeated pledges and remedy the evils against which they were constantly protesting. In an effort to encourage this frame of mind, the regent had granted the permission to open a General Assembly on October 15 (1614). The "brevet" was dated February 17 and was undoubtedly facilitated by the revolt of the princes earlier in the month. To the request of the Protestants that an earlier date be fixed, Marie acceded the

¹ Two Assemblies had been held in 1613, at Casteljaloux and at St. Jean d'Angéli, but these represented only a few provinces and were without significance.

more willingly inasmuch as she had already given them permission to nominate special deputies to the Estates General which opened in August. The date was changed to July 15 and Grenoble was named as the place of assembly.

Now Grenoble had been chosen by the regent because there the Assembly would be under the eye of Lesdiguières, governor of Dauphiny, a safe man although a Protestant, and one in whom the king had entire confidence. He supported the Protestants in their petition for a General Assembly, but at the same time had promised the regent that as far as in his power lay he would prevent the taking of any steps prejudicial to the interests of the Crown. Feeling then that their freedom would be seriously curtailed by the influence of Lesdiguières, the Protestants objected to meeting in that city. When permission to change the place of meeting was refused to them, a few of the deputies convoked a special conference in Montauban on November 10. This arbitrary act on the part of a faction met with opposition within the Assembly itself, of which the king took advantage, while again confirming the edicts (Oct. 1, 1614), to postpone the Assembly altogether until the following year, but Jargeau was substituted for Grenoble. The Assembly objected to Jargeau because it was too near Paris and asked that they be left at Grenoble. At Grenoble then they convened on July 15, 1615.¹

¹ To tranquilize the excitement caused by their discussions concerning the meeting place of the Assembly, a fresh confirmation of the Edict had been published on March 1 of this year.

This Assembly was one of the most representative and influential of all the Political Assemblies of the Protestants. It was also one of the most fatal for their cause. Full deputations were in attendance from every one of their seventeen ecclesiastical provinces.¹ The deputies-general were present, and the Grandees each sent a deputy, eight in all, bearing from their masters letters of adhesion and loyalty. Its purpose was the election of deputies-general and the preparation of a cahier of grievances, but these interests were soon extended to embrace the whole political situation of the Protestant body. The session lasted for eleven months, from July 15, 1615, to June 15, 1616. It sat first at Grenoble by permission of the king. Thence on October 1, in opposition to his commands, it moved to Nîmes. There it sat as an illegal Assembly until February, 1616, whence it was transferred to La Rochelle, again legitimized by royal patent.

The chief claim of this Assembly to fame rests on its transactions with the revolted princes. Indeed, after the first three weeks of the session the whole time of the Assembly was devoted to business arising out of its relations with Condé. No sooner had it completed the formalities of its opening, verification of powers, oath of union and election of officers, August 10, and drawn up its statement of grievances, than letters arrived from this prince, assuring them of his concern for their interests and pointing out that by uniting with the princes they could "arrest the torrent of ills

¹ Béarn included since Saumur.

which otherwise might not be stemmed in several years". A rider was immediately added to the petition about to be forwarded to the king, praying him to give consideration to the protests of Condé.

Such was the beginning of the process by which the Protestants insinuated themselves into a quarrel which was in no sense their own. They refrained from an immediate and outright espousal of the cause of the malcontents. They thought that they saw in the king an immature youth who had fallen into the hands of an unscrupulous and unpatriotic cabal but whose right instincts would not fail to justify the acts of the party of protest when its reasonable cause had asserted its mastery over him. Clinging to Condé they also tried to carry the king with them so that the balance of power would ultimately swing in the direction of reform. Reform to them meant what it meant to Condé so far as the public interests were concerned. In the case of each there were in addition personal or sectional interests involved. Condé and the princes were determined that there should be no peace without rewards and emoluments. The Protestants maintained that there could be no peace while their claims remained unsettled: that is to say, they were prepared to cause an upheaval in the state rather than abandon their claims.¹ The first was a case of blackmail, the second one of the satisfaction of a small minority.

Negotiations were prolonged for three months,

¹ Il n'y a pas de chemin plus court ni plus certain à la désolation de nos églises, qui tirerait avec soi le renversement de l'état, que nous diviser. . . . " Bouchitté, 117.

during which period the Assembly maintained at once an active correspondence with Condé and an humble deference towards the king, apparently fearful of outraging the Court by allying itself with the princes and yet anxious to join the revolt, provided that its chances of success seemed adequate. They were not merely temporizing, however. Their policy was ambiguous enough, but their hesitation arose not simply from an eagerness to seize every opportunity for obtaining emancipation from the objectionable conditions of the Edict, coupled with the fear of falling between two stools. The fact is they were not sure of their own lay lords. No step could be taken without the co-operation of their great leaders, and the latter, like the rank and file of the Assembly, were plainly divided in their opinion.

Lesdiguières, backed by Du Plessis-Mornay and others, and roused by the desire of the Assembly to move from what it deemed the baneful influence of his jurisdiction, roundly attacked the proposed alliance, declaring that neither Condé nor the Court were serious in their hostility to each other, and that participation of the Assembly in the cabal would be mere wantonness. Lesdiguières, naturally and in this case, wisely, advocated the *media via* and declared that they should be governed by the precepts of prudence.

We must measure ourselves by our ability not by our desire, by the possible not by our rights. Remember, said he, how often our fathers and we ourselves have sighed for just such liberty as we now possess. In no other state of Christendom is there any liberty comparable to it. . . . If there be any lack in what has been granted us by the Edict, as in reality there is only too much, we may justly

complain and earnestly petition for reparation or addition that we may thereby ameliorate and strengthen the condition of our churches. But let us not overstep the bounds of conscience or of prudence: of conscience by forcing a war which can be blessed of God only in so far as it is just and which can be just only if unavoidable, of prudence by the plain hazarding against arms stronger and better prepared than our own, of a certain condition for the ill-assured hope of some miserable advantage.

These words of the warlike Lesdiguières were the words of a statesman who had accurately plumbed the corruption of the princes; but to his co-religionists they were prejudiced from the start by his friendship for the Court and the looseness of his life. Feeling that within his jurisdiction its discussions were not free, the Assembly (September 22) transferred its sitting to Nîmes to open October 1 despite his active opposition and the king's order (October 12, 1615) that it sit in Montpellier.¹

In the meantime Condé's messages to the Assembly became more and more insistent. He well knew that without the help of protestantism his hopes were dead. The Assembly, having despatched its deputies to the king, sent one also to Condé thanking him for his kind interest in the churches. Thus, while keeping open the avenues in both directions, it was being slowly drawn by its frondist tendencies into the vortex of revolt. Condé's manifesto was published on August 9. It was communicated by him to the Assembly through his special agents on August 17. A committee having been nominated to consider it, the Royal Commissioner called attention to the impropriety of such proceedings. As a consequence,

¹ ubi supra, 101.

the Assembly sent to the king apologies for its conduct. With this message it coupled a plea for the postponement of the Spanish marriages. Its apology, did not, however, seem to it inconsistent with a request to Condé for information concerning his plans and the means at his disposal for their execution, nor with an exhortation to the provinces to be on a diligent guard and to remember the terms of the oath of union. Events were urging a decision upon the Assembly.

On September 4 Condé suggested a definite alliance of which the proposed objects were: (1) to guarantee the king's safety and the maintenance of his authority, to punish the assassins of Henry IV and their accomplices; (2) to prevent the confirmation of the decrees of the Council of Trent; (3) to put an end to the Spanish marriages; (4) to free the king from the pernicious influences by which he was surrounded; (5) to re-organize the Royal Councils; (6) to ensure the execution of the edicts in favour of protestantism; (7, 8, 9) to pursue these ends together and to make no treaty except by common consent. Again on the 11th he remonstrated with the Assembly over its hesitations, but the latter persisted in its refusal to make any motion until it had received a reply from the Court.

This reply, so far as the protest against marriages was concerned was communicated to the Assembly on the eighteenth.

Our marriage was long since determined upon after mature deliberation and by the advice of our cousin the prince of Condé and of the other princes of the blood and officers of the Crown, even of those

who are now with our said cousin. In consequence of this, it was agreed with them that our journey should take place during the present year, and was even delayed several months that those who were to accompany us might prepare themselves for it. Therefore it cannot be said or pretended that we acted with precipitancy. Our good subjects and servants must believe and rest assured that our said marriage will make no alteration in the maintenance of the alliances that exist with foreign princes, states or republics, nor in the entire observation of our edicts published for the repose of the kingdom, we have no greater desire than to maintain all our subjects in peace and tranquillity, in the enjoyment of our said edicts, which we shall cause to be carefully executed, observed and maintained even as far as concerns our subjects of the so-called reformed religion.¹

Some days later the Royal Commissioner returned to Grenoble with the replies to the petition. He found that the Assembly had closed its session at Grenoble to open at Nîmes on October 1. In this message the king took credit to himself for the unusual course now followed of replying to the cahier before the dissolution of the Assembly. He urged the Assembly to make all haste in the nomination of six deputies in order that the Assembly might disperse, for it caused "great mistrust and umbrage to all his other subjects". As for the word "prétendue" (in the phrase 'religion prétendue réformée') no change could be made without offending the religion of the state, but a circumlocution was suggested for use by magistrates, namely *l'église établie suivant les édits*. In those parlements to which this suggestion was unacceptable, magistrates should receive instructions to overlook the

¹ ubi supra, 78.

omission of this objectionable adjective.¹ The deputies of the prince were to leave the Assembly forthwith. The deputies to the Assembly from Béarn would be dealt with personally by the king.

Such a reply contained no shadow of reassurance for the Protestants. It was the reply to which they had been accustomed, words with no effect in deeds. To be sure it was accompanied by letters patent confirming the retention of the surety-towns for six years more. But before every Protestant mind there sprang anew not merely the old and ever-recurring grievances which had again found expression in the substance of the remonstrances of the Assembly and were based on the falseness of the whole situation. New and alarming circumstances revived their sensitiveness and jealousy. The Spanish alliances sounded the death-knell of protective Protestant influence and predicted the revival of ultramontaniam. Jesuit preaching was once more filled with virulence. The angry altercations of the Estates General concerning the relations between popes and kings had stirred their apprehensiveness to dread. The bitter and unrebuked onslaughts of the Assembly of the Clergy upon Protestant liberties roused their instincts of self-defence. The missionary zeal of the Roman catholics alarmed them. The unfulfilled pledges of the Court exasperated them. An empty reiteration of those pledges insulted them. Hence, in spite of intestinal divisions which more and more undermined their

¹ Tolérer et dissimuler aux attestations des ministres qui leur seront présentées le manquement du mot prétendue.

integrity and their authority over their own local Assemblies and betrayed them into the hands now of Condé, now of the king, they felt themselves forced to listen to the overtures of the prince.

The deputies showed their resentment at their frivolous treatment by the Court in urging Rohan to espouse openly the cause of the prince. They assured him that by so doing he would receive the support of the Assembly.

For two years Rohan had avoided turbulence and lived a devoted servant of the Crown, the king's loyal representative and fearless adviser. Now he threw his scruples to the winds. The news of the real disposition of the Assembly, coupled with the solicitations of Soubise, his brother, and of certain disaffected Catholic nobles of Guyenne, the desire to avenge himself of the slight put upon him by the regent in refusing him the reversion of the Governorship of Poitou, all these things led him to embrace the cause of the rebels.

He began his campaign in Guyenne early in October, with the object of joining Saint Pol who, with other disaffected Catholic nobles of the South, had unfurled the standard of revolt and was now presumably operating to intercept the progress of the king to Bordeaux. What was his amazement to find that Saint Pol had already gone over to the king, taking with him a large body of men, and delivering up Caumont and Fronsac, the latter at least a place of some strategical importance! Thus weakened¹ Rohan, who now became commander

¹ The defection of Saint Pol reduced his forces from 6,500 to one-tenth that number and at no time did Rohan have more than 2,000 men under him—Pontchartrain, 349.

of the forces in Lower Guyenne, found himself unable to move against the king. Nevertheless he made himself master of Lectoure and Damazan and, though with great difficulty, persuaded Montauban to join his standard. At the same time he sought the authorization of the Assembly.

The Assembly was now sitting at Nîmes. Three days after it had received Rohan's request, a message came from Condé asking for a definite announcement of adhesion. For nearly two months the Assembly had avoided a decision. It still hesitated, but went so far as to order Upper Guyenne and La Rochelle to give to Rohan the support he asked, but "to commit no act of hostility against the Roman catholics in any way whatever, by the taking of prisoners or otherwise". This amazing order was followed on the fifteenth by another apparently equally stultifying. An alliance with Condé was voted, provided that he "do not depart from obedience to the king and that his sole object in seeking the recovery of our freedom and safety at the welfare of the king, the maintenance of the state, the greatness and aggrandizement of the monarchy, and the conservation of the edicts".¹ This step was taken after the report of the reply to the cahiers and was precipitated by the lack of consideration shown by the Court towards the Assembly's remonstrances and by the bitter decree that had been launched against Condé denouncing him and all those who joined him as guilty of high treason. The Court might have objected that the

¹ Bouchitté, 105; Haag, 9: 102.

Assembly showed slight appreciation of the concession made by the king in forwarding at once the replies to its remonstrances instead of withholding them until after the nomination of candidates for the deputy generalship, thereby removing what, ever since the foundation of that office, had been the bond of contention between that body and the Crown.

It must not be supposed that the Assembly lacked encouragement from its "grands seigneurs" in the course that it pursued. Not all of those by any means saw eye to eye with Lesdiguières and Du Plessis-Mornay. Many of them¹ gave the Assembly every possible encouragement. Furthermore, provinces and cities² "urged the Assembly to make a choice". Even then it was only with trepidation that the plunge was taken. Scouting every suggestion of self-interest, protesting over and over again that they

were and would remain forever the very humble and faithful subjects and servants of the king from whose obedience and protection they would never in any way depart, they resolved to unite their councils with those of the prince, esteeming that the extremity to which they saw the affairs of the state reduced forced them as good and faithful subjects to do what in them lay for the reform and restoration of the state. Judging, says the Assembly in its report to the churches, that between two distinct parties, it was now impossible and dangerous to remain neutral, the result of which, ordinarily, is to become the prey of the victors; being persuaded in our consciences that the party of the prince is the more legitimate, since it has as its object the welfare and service of the king and the

¹ La Trémouille, Rohan, Soubise, la Force, Châtillon, de Favas, de Boisse and others.

² Upper and Lower Guyenne, Poitou, Bretagne, Languedoc, La Rochelle, Aigues-Mortes, Jargeau.

preservation of his authority, and assures us of the maintenance and observation in good faith of our edicts and other things necessary for our existence in this realm, we, after long and serious consideration, have concluded that we should not longer defer our response to the summons made us to join the prince.

Accordingly, on October 22, the Assembly despatched three of its number, Desbordes-Mercier, de Crusel and de la Nouaille, to inform Condé of their decision. On the last day of the month letters were sent also to the dukes of Bouillon, Longueville, Mayenne and Luxembourg, stating their decision and praying for the approbation of these gentlemen. The articles of the agreement were not drawn up, however, until November. They were not ratified until the following January.

Meanwhile disaffection everywhere increased among the Protestants. Upper Guyenne and Upper Languedoc seethed with unrest. Disturbances which had been fomented here and there by popular excitement or by the restless passion of certain members of the Assembly, and which the moderates were unable to control, caused great uneasiness to the Assembly, as well as to the representatives of the Crown. Catholics and Protestants filled with alarm armed locally against each other. The former appealed to the provincial governors for protection against the latter, while the Protestants made similar appeals to the Assembly against their Catholic neighbours. These appeals were repeated by the Assembly to the governors and lieutenant-governors of the provinces.

The organization that the Assembly was giving slowly and reluctantly to their military power

seemed all the more sinister because it was so sporadic and slow. Military commanders were appointed, towns were garrisoned, civic elections were manipulated¹. Rohan was active in Guyenne and Languedoc where the Provincial Assembly of Montauban had appointed him commander-in-chief. He pressed the General Assembly to confirm his election to this post and to initiate more energetic measures. The Assembly did not accede to his request until December 14, and contented itself, in the meantime, with ordering Upper Languedoc, Upper Guyenne, Saintonge, Poitou, Bretagne, and La Rochelle to give all possible support to Rohan in Lower Guyenne, where, deserted by Saint Pol and the Catholics, he, with La Force, Pardaillan and others, at the head of a miserable command hoped to oppose the passage of Louis. A deputy, Favas, having been dispatched to that province, his own constituency, for the purpose of rousing the Protestants to vigilance, raised an army on his own account and posted himself in the path of the royal progress.

At the instigation of the General Assembly, special provincial Assemblies were held in various provinces for the planning of such measures as might be deemed necessary for the repose and welfare of the churches.² La Force was made General of Lower Guyenne, Rohan of Upper Guyenne and Upper Languedoc. The latter seized Souillac. Soubise was in Poitou at the head of

¹ Bouchitté, 123-4.

² Haag, 2nd ed. 3: 444, 873; Haag, 8: 478; Bouchitté, 93 ff.

4,000 foot and 500 horse, waiting for the arrival of Condé who was advancing from the north.

The Assembly found itself unable to cope with the situation. Having begun by disobedience to the command of the king that it should sit at Montpellier, it found itself carried along by the spirit of revolt. It urged the provincial Assemblies to repress all disorder and to permit no hostile act. But these Assemblies were forced to rely for the execution of their commands upon leaders like Rohan, Soubise, La Force and Candale¹ who were already under arms, not for the purpose of maintaining order but of undertaking operations against the king. Furthermore, these leaders were trying, by word as well as by act, to inflame the minds of their compatriots and co-religionists. It was therefore not within the power of the provincial Assemblies, though they might be so minded, to give effect to the orders of the superior body. The latter found itself caught in the meshes of its own ambiguous policy. Having roused the passions of these sections of the communion, it was unable to control them. Unwilling to force the issue, the course of events decided the debate. Condé's campaign was well advanced. The king launched a declaration (November 10) against him and those Protestants that persisted in rebellion. There could be now no question of turning back.

The whole of France seemed about to be inflamed with rebellion. Mayenne was in the Ile-de-

¹ Son of d'Épernon, whose conversion in January had been hailed by the Protestants almost as a sign from heaven confirming the justice of their cause.

France, Longueville in Picardy, Luxembourg in Champagne, Vendôme in Bretagne, Condé and the Protestants in Poitou, Saintonge and Guyenne. The Assembly, now committed to the cause of the malcontents, did its utmost to arouse the full-hearted support of the churches. As a matter of fact, however, its efforts met with no adequate response save in the south-western provinces, that stronghold of heresy. As Lesdiguières had prophesied, the Assembly was able to carry with it only a small section of the body of protestantism.¹ Lesdiguières himself offered to bring 6,000 men to the service of the king against his co-religionists. On November 11, Condé writes to the Assembly complaining that while he is making extraordinary efforts to join the Protestant armies in the south, the Protestants of the north are lending him no aid whatever. Even in Languedoc, Guyenne and Poitou, in which provinces alone was found any enthusiasm for the cause of the Assembly, there were many incorrigible advocates of peace, and several important centres, Châtellerault, Niort, Montpellier, refused altogether to lend an ear to its overtures. As if quite conscious of this weakness, a fourth deputation was moved to Louis praying for peace. This resolution was taken on the very day on which the king's declaration appeared, but the deputies did not set out until December 1.

No reason now existed for the longer postponement of a definite treaty with Condé. Preliminary articles received the latter's signature at Sanzay on November 27. Two deputies (Desbordes-

¹ Fontenay-Mareuil, 100.

Mercier and Nouaille) became members of Condé's council while La Haye and Parenteau replaced these in the Assembly as proxies of the prince. The Assembly was furnished with commissions for its officers. All that remained to establish "a good, assured and lasting peace" was the ratification of the treaty by the Assembly. This was done on January 16, 1616, Condé agreeing "to engage in no treaty without the knowledge and consent of the Assembly".¹

But already the game was up. The mass of the Protestants were hopelessly disinterested. The Assembly had never been more than half-hearted and none of its generals had gained any advantage in the field. Rohan had not been able to create any serious diversion in Guyenne, outside of Casteljalous. Favas, at the approach of the cavalry of Guise, "turned to the right about with his entire following and, re-entering the city, never showed face afterwards". La Force, fearing trouble in his own province, found himself compelled to withdraw from Guyenne and to retrace his steps to Béarn. The army of Condé, 5,500 strong after a *campagne de parade* was idle in Poitou. Negotiations with England had been bootless. The campaign had failed owing partly to discord, partly to the watchfulness of Boisdauphin and Guise. Money was lacking and the people, suffering from extortions and the passage of troops, became more and more irritated. Condé's forces under the leadership of the duc de Bouillon had set out from Noyon, avoided the royal general, Boisdauphin, passed

¹ Bouchitté, 147.

around Paris, effected a junction with Rohan and Soubise, and occupied the principal strongholds of Poitou almost without molestation. Once in Poitou it was outnumbered and overawed by the king's forces under Guise.¹

But it is difficult to believe that either Condé or the Court thought seriously of settling their differences by arms. As early as December 20, Condé had welcomed overtures of peace from the king. Moreover, the quiet consummation of the so-called Spanish marriages on November 28 robbed the revolt of its prime pretext.

The Assembly then having learned of the pacific disposition of the king and queen, approved of the steps taken by Condé, who was at pains to inform the Assembly that the inclusion of the Protestants was a necessary preliminary to the negotiations. Unsuccessful in the rôle of patriot-rebels, the Protestants were now compelled to rely upon the good faith of a faithless prince.

Thus all parties were only too well disposed to peace.³ The Court itself had taken the initiative in its overtures to Condé.⁴ The princes affected to regard the momentary prestige of their position in Poitou as a favourable condition for forcing advantageous terms. The Assembly, while not free from refractory elements, was forced to negotiations by its distrust of Condé as well as by the divisions which paralyzed its effectiveness.

¹ Fontenay-Mareuil, 91 ff.

² Cf. Bouchitté, 38-9.

³ Richelieu, 105-6; Anquez, 275-6; Pontchartrain, 355.

⁴ Bouchitté, 155-6.

A conference had been fixed for February 10 and a truce proclaimed. The Assembly hastened to name its deputies, and, with the consent of the king transferred its session to La Rochelle, which had the advantage of being at once nearer Loudun, the seat of the conference, as well as being the strongest of the Huguenot cities.

CHAPTER VI

THE TREATY OF LOUDUN

The king's deputies arrived in Loudun on the afternoon of February 13. Condé reached the city the same evening. It was the nineteenth before the deputies of the Assembly announced their presence. Condé, having given his word to the Assembly that he would defer the opening of the conference until the arrival of its deputies, employed the intervening week in a successful effort to have the truce prolonged until March 15 and its terms extended to include the duc de Vendôme.¹

Negotiations were formally opened on the twenty-first when a committee was named to draft a basis of peace. The assumption upon which proceedings were initiated was that no final agreement should be made concerning any single article until the complete peace had been accepted. This condition was insisted upon by the king as well as by Condé because the general interests were deemed to be of more pressing importance than the interests of the self-seeking princes who were likely to be satisfied with mere money payments, arrangements for which might have retarded peace indefinitely.

To the royal commissioners instructions had been furnished that deputies from the Assembly should not receive official recognition on account

¹ "Sur cela grande contestation", Bouchitté, 335.

of the illegal constitution of that body and of the large number of Protestants who were opposed to its methods. The deputies were to be permitted, however, to make representations through Condé and their demands were to constitute a substantive part of the deliberations of the conference, along with (1) matters concerning the general interests of the state and (2) the private demands of the princes and nobles.

His Majesty did not consider that they (the Protestants) had any demands to prefer other than those contained in the cahier presented at Poitiers, to which the most favourable reply possible had been given. With this they should be satisfied.¹

But the tables were turned upon the royal commissioners when the committee appointed by Condé and the Protestants refused to accept their credentials because of their failure to acknowledge the Assembly's nominees. Whereupon new letters from the king gave full status to the Protestant deputies, though the king, for fear of offending loyal Protestants, affected to regard these as representing protestantism rather than the Assembly of Nîmes.

The conference dragged for ten weeks. The truce was extended from time to time so as to cover eventually this entire period. But the very uncertainties attendant upon such conditions and the ever-recurring possibility that peace might be abruptly ended at any given moment kept men's minds in a state of suspense and irritation. The arrival of Vendôme and his forces about March 1, by augmenting the confidence of the rebels, in-

¹ Bouchitté, 331-3.

creased the difficulties of the royal commissioners. The restlessness of the troops resulted in constant breaches of the peace and embittered all relationships. The slowness of the king's responses embarrassed his own agents and sowed suspicion in the minds of Condé and his adherents. Over and over again the conference faced a deadlock and broke up in confusion without prospect of reunion. Villeroy, who had been Secretary of State for fifty years and whose life had been spent in diplomatic business, declared he had never been so weary of any negotiations that he had had to conduct. In the end, however, the prodigality of the Court¹ and the facility of Condé overcame all obstacles and peace was assured.

Condé has been charged with the abandonment of the Protestants, thus forcing them to accept an unsatisfactory and fruitless peace. Certainly he had no interest in protestantism, its ambitions or its rights. His first concern was peace. He impressed the royal commissioners as being "passionately eager for peace". He did more than any other to effect peace, not because he hated commotion but because peace more than war was to his immediate advantage. On more than one occasion when all hope of agreement had been destroyed, it was through the mediation of Condé that cordial relations were reestablished, concord restored and progress made.

Condé's character and reputation were not

¹ Upwards of 6,000,000 livres were paid to the princes in settlement of their claims, Condé alone receiving one-fourth of that amount.

such as to inspire confidence. His nature was full of ambiguities. Had he been resolute, single-minded and unselfish, he might have led a successful rebellion and carried reform further than had been anticipated even by the Third Estate, whose cause he had affected to adopt. But his motives were always open to suspicion. It was his character rather than his acts or, perhaps, his acts interpreted through his character that gave rise to the accusation, made against him by princes and Protestants alike, that he and Bouillon were conspiring "to make peace for themselves, for their own honour and profit". Rumour even spread abroad the terms of his private peace. In the same way and for almost the same reasons upon which his confederates based their suspicions of Condé, the Court conceived suspicions of the king's Commissioners.¹

Yet there was nothing clandestine in his movements in these negotiations although there was cupidity and cowardice. By active correspondence he tried to convince the regent as well as Louis of his good intentions and lack of personal malice. He used all the influence within his control to modify the demands of the Assembly. In the end he signed the peace without formal orders from that body. But, although the Protestants had been extremely slow in forming an alliance with him and even then had lacked the force with which to make their wishes effective so that their "self-interested and tempestuous demands inspired him with greater disgust than

¹ Bouchitté, 49.

interest", he did not leave them without an advocate. They insisted upon a revision of the replies to the petitions which had been presented to the king at Tours and Poitiers, and Condé urged upon the king the desirability of reconsideration. The latter, nevertheless, stood firm in his refusal to re-open the question. Unwilling to make the least concession he declared that it were better to break off negotiations than to yield upon any point, that if the conference were not brought to a speedy conclusion, he would recommence hostilities. Now Condé knew very well that he, much more the Assembly, was in no position to oppose the king in arms. He tried therefore to mitigate the clamour of the Assembly while at the same time urging upon the Commissioners the advisability of making an effort to allay Protestant discontent. Whether or not, then, he was as good as his word and "did everything in his power for their welfare", the royal commissioners much dreaded the influence of the Protestants upon him, and it is beyond doubt that the final terms of the treaty as they affected the Protestants were better than anything the latter could have hoped to obtain without his aid.

The Protestants remained inexorable in their insistence upon the unsatisfactory nature of the replies to the cahier of Poitiers. Nothing would content them save a complete reconsideration. So vigorously did they press this claim, and so fixed did they appear in their determination to yield nothing, however insignificant, that the Com-

missioners regarded them as bent upon war and likely to make impossible any settlement with Condé.¹

Like Condé, the Protestants refused to accept the king's reply to the articles concerning the Crown's independence of the Holy See. When a solution had been found for this disagreement, the reformation of the *chambre de l'édit* of Paris became the rock of offence. The Assembly next insisted upon the payment of the expenses "of their Assemblies of Grenoble, Nîmes and La Rochelle, and talked of nothing less than 50,000 crowns". The Commissioners suggested 10,000. Condé supported this demand and, as well, another for an annual grant during five or six years to La Rochelle for its fortifications.

By March 30, however, such progress had been made that Pontchartrain was able to write to Sceaux that nothing then remained but to come to terms with the individual nobles, whose demands were exorbitant and unreasonable.² While the king delayed to forward his instructions in these matters, the constant infractions of the truce, and particularly the capture by the Catholics of the towns of Tartas and Aire, roused the Assembly to belligerent fever. The last week of March was devoted to preparation for war.

This flame was fed by the intrigues of Sully and Rohan, who preferred that no agreement should be made until their private ambitions had

¹ ubi supra, 420 ff.

² ubi supra, 531.

been gratified.¹ As a consequence of their interference the Assembly refused to listen to the counsel of its deputies Rouvray and Berteville that concessions be made in the interests of the repose of the churches, retracted its promise to Condé to send to the conference twelve or fifteen deputies with full power to conclude peace for protestantism, and in the place of these sent three of the most *exaltés*, charging them

to represent to the prince in the strongest terms their dissatisfaction with the way in which he was conducting negotiations, with the insignificant rôle assigned to them in the matter, with the indifference he himself showed in obtaining satisfaction for the violation of the Edict, with the replies made by the king's deputies to the articles of the cahiers both as they referred to the Protestants and to the general interests of the state.

Condé dreaded the effect upon the conference of these "complaints and unfriendly dispositions". He therefore withheld them from the commissioners, but sent Sully, Deshayes, Buzenval and Fiefbrun, supported by the English ambassador, to represent to the Assembly the dangers of the situation and to urge them not to put any obstacles in the way of peace. At the same time he urged the commissioners to impress upon the Court the need for a more favourable reception of Protestant demands.

Sully and his colleagues found the Assembly occupied with the question of the reception of Béarn as one of the ecclesiastical provinces, and profoundly surprised and irritated by the unex-

¹ Sully demanded the succession of the lieutenant-generalship of Poitou for his son-in-law Rohan. Rohan wanted the governorship of Guyenne.

pected and frank declarations of the royal intentions concerning that province as set forth in the reply to the Assembly's cahier. Their anger rose to such a pitch that they seemed now resolved to enlarge altogether their earlier proposed conditions of peace not merely by a demand to assure to Béarn its continued independence, but by others providing (1) for the disarmament of the troops and the restoration of Protestant towns captured by the royal troops, (2) for the appointment of a commission to enforce the observance of the Edict of Nantes and to correct infractions thereof, and (3) for the continuance of the Assembly for six weeks after the signature of the treaty, or until such time as the edict of peace should be verified by the various parlements. Sully, however, prevailed upon the Assembly to abandon this attitude of hostility and to accept peace on the terms proposed, looking to the later redress of their wrongs through the channels constitutionally provided for that purpose. On April 15, then, the Assembly grudgingly resolved

to accept the peace, such as it was, which his Majesty had been pleased to offer to the prince, assured that his Majesty would not take it ill that his subjects of the religion should appeal to him, through the ordinary channels, for the obtaining of replies necessary to their liberty and safety.

It empowered its representatives to sign the treaty but to insist on the continuation of the Assembly *en abrégé* until its execution.

The latter condition was not acceptable to the king. Therefore peace seemed as far away as ever. To make matters worse, Condé had fallen seriously

ill. The Protestants did not believe that under these circumstances a satisfactory peace could be negotiated. The prolongation of the session of the Assembly became a matter of greater importance than ever. "If this were not granted them, they would be forced to resist the conditions of peace and to protest against a breach of faith on the part of the princes and nobles." The commissioners regarded this manoeuvre as a mere pretext for resuming the war.

On May 3, after a discussion that lasted several days, Condé insisted on the signing of the treaty. To allay the apprehensiveness of the Protestants, the commissioners conceded them the right to continue in session until June 15. Not satisfied with this the Protestant deputies demanded further assurances. High words were used. In the midst of the altercation Condé called for the treaty, and sitting up in his bed affixed his signature to it saying—

I do not wish to hear anything more of these objections that are raised by persons who are not disposed to peace; those who are well affectioned towards me will follow my example; those who are not will be compelled to follow it.

Condé's summary dismissal of the difficulties alleged by the Assembly to lie in the way of peace outraged the deputies of that body⁸ and they left the conference. It was not long, however, before they were persuaded to return. Then, because the ardour of the discussion was too much for Condé's feeble state, an adjournment was made to the lodgings of the Countess of Soissons who had been

¹ Pontchartrain, 444.

from the beginning a party to the conference. There the Protestants having received from Pontchartrain assurance in writing that the patents in fulfilment of concessions made to them would be prepared forthwith, signed the peace at nightfall on May 3.

This treaty promised that further enquiry would be made into the question of the death of Henry IV; it asserted the independence of the French Crown as regards the Holy See; it confirmed the Edict of Nantes in its completeness, brevets and secret articles as well as general clauses; it absolved Condé and all his following from the consequences of their rebellion and sanctioned the treaties with individuals; the grant to the Protestants was increased; Tartas was restored; Villeroy was retained in office; the Council of Trent was not received.

On May 6 the treaty was ratified by the Edict of Blois. On the twelfth the Assembly received from the hands of Pontchartrain the promised patents as follows: (1) that by which the Assembly was authorized to name directly the two deputies-general, this concession not to be regarded as a precedent; (2) those which confirmed an increase of 30,000 livres in the royal grant for the maintenance of pastors and garrisons; (3) that which continued to the Protestants the possession of the surety-towns for an additional term of six years; (4) that which assured to the Assembly the right of continuing in session until June 15; (5) Sully's guarantee of payment of the expenses of the Assembly; (6) the king's replies to their cahiers.

The accounts of the year were then examined. Certain minor modifications were made in their political organization. The deputies-general were elected. Finally, on June 2, the Assembly dissolved without waiting for the ratification of the peace by any of the parlements.

On July 20 a Declaration was published as a pendant to the Edict of Blois which confirmed all previous edicts made in favour of the Protestants and affirming that "in the coronation oath he had not intended to include his subjects of the *religion prétendue réformée*". This the king did, according to Benoit "so as not to allow to Condé the honour of obtaining any advantage for the Protestants".

Thus at La Rochelle ended the labours of the General Assembly of the Protestants that had opened at Grenoble almost exactly one year earlier. It had been a year of hot anger, economic waste and even bloodshed. Out of its confusion and bitterness the Protestants emerged with nothing that they might not have gained more advantageously by the less offensive processes of peace. They had not prevented the Spanish alliances, they had not re-organized the king's councils, they had produced no real reforms in the administration of the finances, they had in no sense modified the hostility of catholicism. Nor had they been more successful in the narrower sphere of Protestant religious interests than they had been in the larger area of national politics. If in the latter they had been the tools of Condé, in the former they had really been the tools of certain of their own nobles whose private concerns were the only Protestant

interests that had certainly profited by the rebellion. It is true that they succeeded in extorting from the king an increase of 30,000 livres in the royal grant for the maintenance of their surety-towns and the payment of their ministers. The king had also agreed to pay the expenses of their Assembly. But these money grants in no way compensated for the sharper divisions which appeared in their own communion, or for the deeper hatred of protestantism which this revolt sowed in the mind of Louis, seeds of which the fruits were to be reaped almost within the lifetime of every Protestant living at the date of the Treaty of Loudun.

CHAPTER VII

LA ROCHELLE AND THE BÉARN QUESTION

Repose was not established by the Treaty of Loudun. The rebel nobles came and did obeissance to the king. The Council was re-organized, but the Maréchal d'Ancre¹ returned to the Court and there enjoyed greater consideration than before. Condé was in Paris, where he had made his entry amid scenes of great popular enthusiasm.

Again Condé's vain mediocrity became the centre of intrigues which the inveterate hostility of the nobles wove about the fortunes of Concini. There were rumours abroad of mysterious meetings, of dark, nocturnal deliberations. It was feared that Condé, taking advantage of the momentary favour he enjoyed among the common people, would attempt to change the form of government. Finally, on September 1, the alarm of the king and Queen Mother culminated in his arrest as he left the council chamber. He was thrown into the Bastille.

¹ Concini the Florentine adventurer who had come to France in the suite of Marie de Médicis had married Leonora Galigai, the queen's confidante. He soon gained complete ascendancy over the queen herself who besides conferring many minor offices upon him, made him Baron de Lusigny, Marquis d'Ancre and Marshal of France. Whatever divisions existed among the nobles of the Court they were united in hatred of this new-comer. He was assassinated in 1617 at the instigation of de Luynes, favorite of Louis XIII. The people showed their detestation of him by exhuming his corpse and burning it before his own palace.

Anticipating disturbances, the king raised an army of ten or twelve thousand men. But the populace remained unmoved except for a certain number of the common people who pillaged the Concini house. The intriguing companions of Condé fled to Soissons. There, with Guise as intermediary, they declared that "honour, safety and the execution of the Treaty of Loudun" was all they sought. It was a new League of the Public Weal without the name. On October 6 a declaration absolved these nobles from guilt of treasonous practises and the king dispersed the force he had assembled.

It would have been astonishing if protestantism had not been affected by these transactions. Indeed their body had been swept with new agitations in the latter part of May, shortly after the conclusion of the peace. At that time in Upper Languedoc, Châtillon, jealous of Montmorency, had convinced the Protestants that the latter contemplated such action against Aymargues, one of their surety-towns, as would wrest it from their control. Therefore they moved against that place with 3,000 or 4,000 troops, captured it, and forced Montmorency to put it under the protection of the town council and the guardianship of the citizens. The council consisted of members of their own faith.

The shock of Condé's fall, however, they felt more seriously. To some extent they were directly concerned in it, for while Sully and Rohan were on this occasion at the king's side, Bouillon and Trémouille were both involved with the prince.

Fearing that Condé's arrest was only the first act of vengeance meditated against all those who had had any share in the late rebellion, they prepared in many places to provide for their own safety. The story of Aymargues was repeated in the conflict about Sancerre, another surety-town. The seigneur of that place, being a Catholic, had established a Catholic garrison there, contrary to the terms of the Edict. It was by such means that the Protestants lost many of their strongholds. But in this case the people rose and drove out the garrison. Appeal was then made to the king's council, which gave a verdict similar to that which it had rendered in the case of Aymargues. The Court, says Benoit, "did not wish to swell the party of the malcontents". This verdict was followed on September 30 by a declaration confirming the Edict of Blois.

The disputes over Aymargues and Sancerre were of minor importance. Such incidents were not unusual even in times of public calm. Of much greater significance both for protestantism and for the state was that which centred about Rochefort.

Rochefort in Aunis, is at the mouth of the Charente some twenty miles from La Rochelle and so situated that it commands the landward approaches to that city from the south-east.

La Rochelle was an opulent and proud city, boasting of its commerce, its maritime greatness and its political immunities. It claimed to be free and independent, holding directly of the Crown, governed only by its mayor who was elected

annually by the suffrages of the citizens, and like a king never walked abroad unless surrounded by a guard. It was the greatest of those cities which had been left in the hands of the Protestants as pledges against oppression. Moated, walled and bastioned it stood reputedly impregnable by land or by water, a mighty city of refuge and a gateway for the oppressed to the wide liberty of the seas. It was the centre and capital of protestantism. Since it had become a purely Protestant city (1568) its inhabitants had exhibited in defence of the faith the same jealousy that they had always shown in support of their peculiar municipal privileges. It claimed also that the whole province of Aunis, of which it was the capital, was within its jurisdiction, and pointed not only to tradition but also to ancient royal patents in substantiation of its assumptions.

Thoroughly aware of the strategic importance of Rochefort, the authorities of La Rochelle occupied it as soon as they received news of the imprisonment of Condé. This act aroused the bitter anger of d'Epernon, governor of Angoumois, Saintonge and Aunis, who refused to recognize the proud pretensions of this haughty heretical city, and marched against it with 7,000 men, occupying Tonnay-Charente and Surgères. Then, to avenge himself upon the Rochellese for the detention of four messengers whom he had sent to a Dutch ship anchored in the harbour, which he suspected of giving assistance to Rochefort, with orders for its withdrawal, d'Epernon "wrote to Brouage, Blaye, Bordeaux and a number of other places that all the

ships and merchants from La Rochelle and Holland to be found there should be detained".¹

The present precarious situation of the city attracted the attention of the whole sect. The Marquis of Bonnivet, the duc de la Trémouille and M. de Loudrière (Talensac) hastened thither with all the troops they could muster. Rohan promised help in the event of d'Epernon pushing his attack. La Rochelle, believing its independence at stake, desired to convoke a General Assembly, but was dissuaded from doing so by Du Plessis. It contented itself with summoning a meeting of the Cercle.

Meanwhile the king, "being advised of all these disorders and seeing they were calculated to light a huge conflagration because the whole Protestant body was being involved in them", sent M. de Boissise to settle the difficulty. The people of La Rochelle declared that they were ready to evacuate Rochefort and disband their troops. D'Epernon having promised to follow suit, did nothing of the sort but, instead, seized the king's revenues for the payment of his troops, "claiming that it was in the service of his Majesty".² Thereupon the king sent another officer, de Vignolles, on the same mission. To him d'Epernon yielded and about the end of December abandoned his campaign.

The Cercle, called for November 16 by the provincial Council of La Rochelle to meet the imminent danger of d'Epernon's attack, had been in session since that date. Its acts are of great

¹ Pontchartrain, 37.

² Ibid., 376.

importance in the history of protestantism at this period. It was made up of representatives from the provincial councils of six of the provinces contiguous to and including that which summoned it. La Rochelle itself was represented by four delegates, Saintonge, Aunis and Angoumois by three, Lower Guyenne by two, Brittany by one, Anjou by three, Poitou by two. All these delegates were of the nobility or of the Third Estate. None were ministers.

Two of the members of the Cercle were deputed to wait upon the king with a request for help. Then that body proceeded to the preparation of a statement of its complaints, first against d'Epernon. It denounced the gathering of arms, ammunition and troops by him and declared itself ready to oppose with force. It then reviewed those grievances which were not peculiar to the complainant Provinces, but were common to the whole body of the churches. Protest was made against the delays and arrearages in the payment of the garrisons of surety-towns, against the building of a fort at Saint-Georges de Pidoue, the illegal detention of two young men at Tonnay-Charente, and the refusal of permission, because of his religion, to a Protestant noble to administer his own property.

The report of its deputies, Grandry and Nouaille, that Louis had refused to receive them so discouraged the Cercle that it could determine upon no line of action. Some proposed a General Assembly. Others combated this suggestion with vigour, urging that it "smacked of rebellion". The

obvious expedient was to sound Vignolles on the progress of his negotiations with d'Epernon. When at last the latter promised to yield to the royal commands, the Cercle was unwilling to rely upon his undertaking. Urged by the violent humour of the people of La Rochelle, it demanded complete reparation for his attack upon the city. The temper of the deputies rising with the anger of the inhabitants, the Cercle furthermore decided to summon a General Assembly unless by February 10 following, d'Epernon had yielded to their demands. The session was then prorogued until February 23.

When the Cercle reassembled it found that d'Epernon had made no motion to accept its terms. On the contrary, he had fortified his position. Automatically its resolution took effect. A General Assembly was convoked for April 14.

Before the date fixed for the opening of the Assembly, Louis forced d'Epernon to come to terms. More than that, he ordered the parlements to accept unconditionally the edicts of peace in favour of the Protestants and directed the commissioners, appointed to enforce observance of these edicts, to begin at once their judicial labours. Furthermore, on the twenty-fourth, the odious tyranny of the Maréchal d'Ancre which had again driven the nobles into open rebellion in every province of France, was brought to an end by his assassination—an event that was hailed with devout thanksgiving by Protestants and Catholics alike. These events robbed the Assembly of its *raison d'être*. Nevertheless it had opened at the appointed time.

The apprehension aroused in the minds of Du Plessis-Mornay and many others of moderate opinions by the persistence of the Assembly was dispelled by its discretion. When its deputies to the Court were refused a royal audience because they represented an unauthorized body, the Assembly, soothed by the courtesy of the king towards these very delegates and assured of a favourable reply to its remonstrances, remained in session only long enough to draw up the inevitable cahier. This made the usual demands, namely: the execution of the edict concerning the exemption of ministers, the association of Protestant judges with Catholic magistrates in criminal trials and the liberation of Condé. But there was one article of capital importance. It had reference to Béarn. It petitioned that no change be made in the government or in the ecclesiastical constitution of this principality. All Protestant provincial councils were urged to protest to the king through the deputies-general against any such action. Provision was made for the holding of a Cercle, consisting of deputies from Lower Guyenne, Upper Languedoc and Béarn, in case of any motion on the part of the Crown to consummate its threatened purpose in regard to the latter. Dissolution took place in the beginning of June.

The Béarn question involved the whole future of protestantism. This was the rock which broke the fortunes of the Huguenot political organization.

Béarn was an ancient viscounty, remarkable at this period for its picturesqueness, its tenaciously independent spirit, and for the representative

character of its institutions. Protestantism had found there a congenial soil. It had taken root in the reign of Henri d'Albret, under the protection of his wife, Marguerite, sister of Francis I. Marguerite was a mystic rather than a theologian and it was only during the reign of her daughter that dogmatic protestantism made any great progress in her domains. Her daughter was Jeanne d'Albret, who, having become herself a Protestant, proclaimed freedom of conscience and established religious equality in her realm in 1563. Thenceforth under the most liberal ordinance then known in Europe, catholicism and protestantism existed side by side in Béarn, until, in 1571, (November 26) the queen, having found herself for long the object of menace on the part of Rome and of conspiracies and rebellions on the part of the clergy at home, at the request of the Estates of Béarn, enacted the so-called "Ecclesiastical Ordinances" which established protestantism as the religion of the state and transferred to a special council the property and revenues of the Catholic Church, to be administered by it for the maintenance of ministers, the support of schools and the relief of the poor.

Jeanne died in 1572. Her ordinances subsisted, however, in full force throughout the entire reign of her son, Henry of Navarre. On the other hand, the latter, as King of France, by the edict of Fontainebleau (1599) had satisfied the insistent demands for justice on the part of the Béarn minority of Catholics by conferring upon them rights similar to those conferred the previous year by

the Edict of Nantes upon the Protestant minority in France.¹

Further concession to clerical importunities was made in 1601 when, instead of an edict of replevin and the restoration of catholicism, seats and a deliberative voice in the Council of State of Béarn were granted to the only two bishoprics it possessed. In 1605 additional places were assigned to them for worship. Henry conciliated Protestant opinion by an undertaking to make no further concessions. This pledge he violated in the following year by relieving the bishops from the jurisdiction of the common courts. In 1607 Béarn became an appanage of the French Crown and was added to the jurisdiction of the parlement of Guyenne. In 1608 the Jesuits were admitted into the country. Only a brusque order from Henry to attend to the business of their churches and to cease their incessant intriguing freed him from the further insistent demands of the clergy.

Under Louis XIII the complaints and demands of the Assembly of the Clergy in regard to this principality were revived with augmented bitterness and insistency. Nothing would satisfy them short of their ancient ascendancy. Nor did their remonstrances always preserve that remarkable dignity and moderation which at this period characterized the utterances of the rising Bishop

¹ The Bishoprics of Lescar and Oloron, the only sees in Béarn, were restored. Catholic worship was allowed in twelve parishes and other isolated places. Catholics again became eligible for public office, and revenues were supplied from the royal treasury, etc., etc.

of Luçon,¹ or of Harlay, coadjutor of Rouen. The former, speaking of the mass of Protestants who, blinded by error, live peaceably under your (the king's) authority, thinks of them only to desire their conversion and to promote it by our teaching and our prayers, which are the arms with which we wish to combat them.

The latter begged Louis, on behalf of the afflicted Catholics of Béarn,

that he would restore the immunities of their bishops and return to the church a little of the oil which he had received of her hands at his coronation, to heal her wounds in those poor and persecuted quarters.

But the Bishop of Macon spoke in much more rancorous vein.

To use the property of the church for the maintenance of her enemies, what else is this than to cause the concubines to drink from the vessels of the Lord's house? We do not complain because in this (harvest) field of France, too fertile in monsters and thorns, the tares of heresy are found inextricably entangled with the corn of holy doctrine, since we are warned to await the harvest; but because in certain quarters of your kingdom, the brambles are suffered to root out and smother the good and wholesome seed of the Father.²

The orator then summoned Louis

not, in imitation of the saintly king, whose blood, whose name and whose sceptre you have inherited, to cross and recross the seas, for the purpose of driving from the Orient the enemy of the Christian name, or of recovering the holy places which he unjustly occupies, but not to permit the Catholic subjects of your sovereign state of Béarn to be treated worse than are the adherents of the Protestant religion in this your kingdom, I say it with shame and yet with truth, worse than the poor Christians under the domination of the infidel.

Ultramontane influences controlled the reigning favourite. Signal favours had been newly showered upon the company of Jesus. Under their inspira-

¹ Later Cardinal Richelieu.

² *Recueil des Actes du Clergé*, 13: 415-416.

tion Luynes had sworn to accomplish the destruction of the Huguenots even at the price of war. As for Béarn, Luynes dreaded the influence of the house of La Force and saw in the ruin of the principality the best method of accomplishing the ruin of his rival in the royal favour, La Force's son, Montpouillan.

Unwittingly the Protestants of Béarn, in conjunction with those of France, had put arms into the hands of her enemies. Negotiations for the union of the two bodies of churches had been long in progress. Deputies from Béarn had sat in the Synod of La Rochelle in 1607 which had transmitted a joint petition to the king that they should enjoy the same rights as the Catholic bishops who had seats in the Assembly of the Clergy of France. In reply to the remonstrances of the regent, who was quick to take advantage of the implications of such a proceeding, they pointed out that the King of Navarre had been Protector of French protestantism and had acted in the name of both. In 1611 deputies from Béarn had actually sat in the Political Assembly of Saumur. But the Assembly had not looked upon Béarn as forming an integral part of their body. It was erected into an ecclesiastical province, however, by the National Synod of Privas, in 1612. In 1614 the Synod of Tonneins "granted to the churches of Béarn the right of convoking the next national synod on condition that they follow the decisions of the national synods of France and carry to them their appeals". By virtue of the terms of the same resolution, Béarn yielded this right to the province

of Bretagne when it became known that the king was using this action of the churches as an argument for the annexation of the principality.

Deputies from Béarn are found at the Assembly of Grenoble in 1615 "determined to sacrifice everything in the pursuit of the methods which they deemed right rather than to await their destruction through the schemes being hatched against them by their opponents".

The Béarn deputies, then, urged upon this Assembly the complete union of their churches with those of France, declaring that henceforth they would consider themselves bound by the regulations of the General Assemblies. Further, the same deputies succeeded in having inserted in the Assembly's cahier an article protesting against the admission of the Bishops of Lescar and Oloron into the Estates of Béarn and demanding the right of their churches to participate in the Assemblies of the French Church. For this reason deputies nominated by Béarn were sent to the conference of Loudun to watch over the interests of that province.

Thus the Crown found in the action of the Protestants an argument in support of its own purposes and its decision remained fixed to consummate union.¹ During the winter and spring of 1617 Du Plessis-Mornay used his influence to

¹The queen was greatly incensed at those of the Religion in Béarn and had word sent to them that if they had deputies at the Assembly of Saumur, it was doubtless because they desired union with the churches of France and, this being the case, she would unite Béarn to France. Cf. Hanotaux, p. 423.

avert the storm. He solicited the Assembly to take no action that would be likely to prejudice the question. That body then acting in the face of this counsel, passed a resolution pledging to Béarn the help of the French churches "in case of oppression or necessity, through any change in the state politically or ecclesiastically", ordered the meeting of the Cercle in like eventuality and in its cahier demanded that the integrity of Béarn be respected. This was a direct defiance of the king.

The National Synod which met this year in Vitré¹ avoided political discussion as far as possible. Good reasons existed for this reserve. The Political Assembly was then in session at La Rochelle and in the question that was just now of burning importance nothing but injury to the cause of Béarn could arise from a positive attitude upon that or other political questions. It is to be noted, too, that more and more of the time of these bodies came to be occupied with petty contentions between individual pastors, or individual churches and communities. To their deputies the king accorded a flattering reception, in striking contrast to the rebuff met by those of the illicit Political Assembly. Their fulsome address he answered by assuring them that in him they would find a good king and continued protection as long as they remained faithful in his service.²

¹ It should have met in Béarn but met at Vitré in Bretagne, May 18, in order that Béarn should not be compromised in the crisis through which it was passing by an open union with the churches of France.

² Aymon 2: 105.

The "deplorable condition" of the churches of Auvergne elicited from the synod remonstrances to the king through the deputies-general who were charged to make this matter their concern "above all others and to beseech his Majesty to dispatch commissioners to put an end to the persecution of the brethren and to punish those who had practised cruelty against them and to have the edicts carried out". Protests were also lodged against the persecution of the Protestants of Sancerre by the Comte de Marans.¹ Sancerre was recommended also to the benevolence of the churches in view of the misery to which it had been reduced through its struggle to maintain itself as a *place de sûreté*. The Colloque of Foix, also, asked relief for similar reasons. In the matter of Béarn, the synod, apparently solicitous not to prejudice in any way the case of that province,

did not deem it wise, for the time being, to ask that the said churches should subject themselves to the discipline of the churches of this kingdom and that they should be subordinate to our National Synods, as to which, however, they shall make known their final decision to the next National Synod.

Neither the timid solicitude of the synod nor "the affection which the Political Assembly testified for the menaced churches served any purpose". They were, perhaps of less weight than the intrigues of certain influential Protestants who pledged the submission of Béarn in return for personal favours. Louis replied to the cahier of the Assembly promising to maintain his subjects in Béarn, Catholic as well as Protestant, in their "ancient privileges"

¹ v. supra, p. 120.

—"an equivocal utterance, the sense and intent of which the Court was shortly to define".¹

None of those changes that had been instituted by Henry IV had the Protestants of Béarn suffered without opposition. Much less did they view with equanimity the persistent efforts of the clergy during the early part of the reign of his son to restore the ascendancy of catholicism in their distracted country. Their resistance was futile. Their constitutional objections were overridden as narrow and provincial. No influences at Court or about the king were found to plead the Protestant cause. Moreover the great final movement toward the consolidation of the monarchy and the unification of the kingdom was daily acquiring momentum. The separatist tendencies of the previous century were to be absolutely destroyed. Henry IV's great work of reconquering France, arrested by the untimely knife of Ravallac, was to be resumed and completed. It was deemed to be in the interests not merely of France, but of Béarn itself, that Henry's edict of reunion in 1607 should receive its full effect. National ambition was involved for the Estates General had demanded it in 1614. It was averred that no innovation was contemplated in the constitution of the principality. Its "fors" and customs should be preserved to it. Like Navarre, it was to serve as a bulwark for France against the power of Spain, while in its turn it would enjoy the protection and share in the glory of its great suzerain. Indeed Béarn, if not Navarre, had once been a part of Guyenne. There-

¹ Anquez, 308.

fore the edict of reunion was published in June. It was followed (June 25) by the decree of replevin which resotred to the Catholic Church its property and its ancient rights, reserving to the Protestants their religious privileges and compensating them by grants from the royal revenues for the income thus forfeited. In September an edict gave permanent form to these provisions. Thus were the Estates General of Béarn shorn of their sovereign authority. A great stride was taken in the establishment of autocratic government, and in the consolidation of the power of the Church.

CHAPTER VIII

LOUIS XIII, BÉARN AND THE PROTESTANTS

The exultation of the clergy over the edicts of reunion and replevin was commensurate with the vehemence that had characterized their earlier importunities. In the polemic that sprang up about the question they ardently supported the cause of the rights of the Crown against the liberal pretensions of Béarn. On July 18 the Bishop of Aire publicly thanked the king for the edicts, profiting by the occasion to make an attack upon the ministers who had ventured to defend the cause of Béarn in a pamphlet boldly prefaced by an epistolary dedication to the king:

What shall I add, gentlemen, unless it be thanksgiving for the deliverance of the Church in Béarn? But how shall I succeed in making my feeble voice heard among the shouts of gladness from a million Catholics who praise God for it, and bless the king and his piety. That your Majesty should have achieved at the age of sixteen what that marvel of kings, your father, desired for more than sixteen years and never was able to accomplish, that demands as full meed of praise, only wonder, astonishment and silence. But how can we keep silent, Sire, now that we come to learn how impiousness opens its lips and speaks more loudly than ever, and how the ministers of irreligion and falsehood dare, in a seditious letter which they have had the impudence to address to your Majesty, charge us with their crimes and impute to the spouse of Jesus Christ the disobedience and crimes of Satan's paramour.

The Estates of Béarn still resisted. They could not easily brook the overriding of their rights. They sent a deputation to Louis bearing their re-

monstrances. At the same time they invoked the aid of the Protestants of La Rochelle and prayed for the support of the deputies-general. But the deputation was regarded as unauthorized and was without other effect than to elicit from Louis an almost superfluous consent that Béarn protestantism might consider itself an integral part of French protestantism and might send its deputies to the ecclesiastical Assemblies of that body, a concession which under a despotic government did not follow logically from the edict of reunion. Moreover, on August 31 preceding the deputation, the king had already replied to the remonstrances of the Assembly of the Clergy, granting the clergy the presidency of the Béarn Estates, seats in the courts, exemption from the jurisdiction of the courts and permission to establish the Jesuits in that country. Only one article was refused, namely, that which asked for four surety-towns. As a direct reply to the Béarn opposition the edict in question was sent for registration to the Parlements of Bordeaux and Toulouse (end of September). Public discussion was prohibited.

Irritation spread through Béarn. The Estates General, at the instigation of La Force, issued a decree declaring that since the edict was plainly prejudicial to the liberties of the country, opposition would be made to its execution no matter who came for that purpose.¹

This decree gave formal expression to the feeling of indignation that excited the whole principality. When the king's agent, Renard, arrived in Béarn

¹ Fontenay, 124.

(April 1618) "he was treated as in a hostile country".¹ At Orthez and at Pau he was insulted by the students. Popular excitement was so great and so general that neither the government nor the parlement dared take steps for its suppression. A request was laid before the Parlement of Paris asking that the agent be ordered to leave. Renard then withdrew from the country, having first written to the Court blaming La Force and the Council of Béarn for all the disorder.

The situation seemed now sufficiently acute to justify the summoning of the Cercle for which provision had been made at the Political Assembly of La Rochelle. A fast was ordered in the churches of Béarn and an assembly of the three provinces convoked at Casteljalous. News of this action reached the king's ears. He ordered the Parlement of Bordeaux and the *chambre* of Nérac to prosecute the members of this Assembly as infractors of the Edict and disturbers of the peace. The consuls of the place fearing to displease the Court shut the gates of the city against the deputies. Tonneins did the same and the Assembly withdrew to Béarn, meeting at Orthez. They were joined by deputies from La Rochelle, the Cévennes and Vivarais. In spite of efforts at secrecy, their movements became known to Louis, and on May 21 a decree was launched against the Cercle and its members. The latter, in July, convoked a General Assembly for August 15 and sent a deputation to Louis praying for authorization. In reply

¹ Richelieu, 183.

Louis issued a peremptory, absolute and unconditional order for the application of the edict.

"When this order reached Béarn it caused the greatest excitement. These harsh methods of absolutism drove to despair a people accustomed to milder treatment".¹ All classes in the country took alarm at the innovation. The Sovereign Council of Pau (October 5) made an interlocutory decree praying the king to "take measures for the protection of the rights of his reformed subjects and to that end to hear their complaints and remonstrances". The Cercle became the centre of opposition. Deputies arrived from Poitou and Saintonge. Others were expected. The Assembly General of Orthez was constituted August 15.

Again concord was wanting among the Protestants. Benoit recites the great names of the party to show that of them all not one, perhaps, felt that the course of resistance was wise. No effective action seemed possible because the requisite force was lacking. "Not that they did not think the cause of the churches just; but this justice was unarmed; they deemed it better to endure the loss of a few privileges which they were without strength to defend, than to hazard all by a resistance that was ill-supported". Only Rohan, Soubise and La Force were willing to act with the Assembly, and at least Rohan and La Force preferred compromise to an insistence upon rights that would imperil the existence of the churches if these, lacking the complete confidence and co-operation of their members, were unable to coerce

¹ Benoit, 2: 261.

the Court. Lesdiguières sent his deputy, Du Cros, to Orthez to urge the Assembly to submit to Louis' orders. To him the Assembly turned a deaf ear. Du Cros then followed the Assembly to La Rochelle and there again impressed upon them that Lesdiguières could not support them in their action. There seems to have been a party who believed that prompt organization and resolute action would have compelled the king to come to the Assembly's terms. These irreconcilables, obsessed with separatist ideas, seemed not to realize the strength of the nationalizing movement that had taken hold of France. But the moment for successful action passed in futile argumentation meant to convince the unwilling.

Du Plessis-Mornay played his customary rôle of caution, attempting mediation between king and Protestants. On the one hand he discouraged the convocation of the Assembly, and on the other strove to moderate the action of the court.

At the close of the year the Assembly moved from Orthez to La Rochelle "for the convenience of the other provinces". The change seemed to Du Plessis to be all in the interests of peace. "The Béarn bell, "he said," is being cast at La Rochelle and perhaps more successfully than at Orthez where the heat is not evenly distributed". Another favourable omen was the refusal of the Assembly to embroil itself in the dispute between the king and the Queen Mother who had just escaped from Blois and had sent an agent (Chambret) to the Assembly for the purpose of encouraging the Protestants to support her cause. The Assembly

refused to receive Chambret, and went so far as to declare that any of its members who sided with the queen against the king would be traitorous to the union of the churches. It then sent a deputation to Louis to assert its fidelity. Having dispatched letters enjoining the province of Béarn to settle its difficulties in an amicable spirit, the Assembly dissolved on April 22.

Du Plessis assigns several motives for this complacent dissolution of the Assembly. Louis was gradually bringing the recalcitrant nobles to an acknowledgment of their duty, and Marie de Médicis having just made peace with him, the Protestants did not wish to be the last to return to obedience. The Assembly wished also to conceal divisions which were becoming more acute within itself and which would have become compromising had the deputies of Lower Languedoc been allowed to execute their determination to withdraw from the session. Moreover, Louis had decided to grant permission for an Assembly at Loudun in the following September (25) and to annul his declaration against the Assemblies of Orthez and La Rochelle.¹

The irritation of the Protestants increased greatly in the interval before the meeting of the Assembly of Loudun. Those who, like Du Plessis-Mornay, hoped that the king would profit by the occasion to make some concessions to Protestant demands, saw their hopes crushed. It was a grievance that nothing had been done to bring

¹ The declaration and the letters patent for this new Assembly were both issued on May 24 following.

repose to the minds of the unhappy Protestants of Béarn, but it was a greater grievance that Protestant rights as under the Edict were becoming more and more illusory and that the commands of the king for the integration of the most obvious of those rights were everywhere safely ignored or successfully resisted by courts of every jurisdiction, superior and inferior. Thus, to say nothing of the violation of their rights of worship, of attacks clandestine as well as open upon their surety-towns, of the refusal of justice on the part of rabidly Catholic parlements like those of Toulouse and Bordeaux, of infinite vexations in regard to the use of cemeteries, to say nothing of all these annoyances which were frequently the fruit of local collisions for which Protestants were often to blame as much as Catholics, it is yet remarkable that the edicts, and *jussions*, of the king for the execution of the terms of the peace of Loudun in so far as the Protestants were concerned, had not succeeded in forcing to compliance either the Parlement of Paris or the Cour des Aides. "The importance of the Assembly, then, depended less upon the questions to be discussed than upon the circumstances under which the meeting was held".¹

On September 26 (1619) eighty-three deputies found themselves at Loudun. Of these thirty-three were nobles, nineteen ministers, thirty-one of the third estate, "persons of quality, honour and standing, from whom only the best was to be expected". The lords were represented by their

¹ Malgré dix jussions on attendait toujours la réception des conseillers protestants, au parlement de Paris. Haag, 6: 205.

proxies who brought letters from their masters cautioning the Assembly to be loyal, moderate and united. The deputies presented their credentials and took the oath of union. Those grievances which had formed the basis of Protestant memorials for at least the last two years¹ were incorporated in a preliminary cahier demanding (1) the recall of the edict of replevin or at least its suspension until the Béarnese should be heard, among whom new excitement prevailed because of a current rumour that fresh orders had been given for the execution of the edict. The Assembly then sent two deputies to Béarn, urging (1) the people to refrain from any open demonstration; (2) extension of the time of tenure of the surety-town; (3) the replacing by a Protestant in the governorship of Lectoure of Fontrailles who had become a Catholic; (4) the acceptance by the Parlement of Paris of two Protestant counsellors; (5) the creation of two Protestant "substitutes" for the *procureur général* in the Parlements of Paris and Grenoble, (6) satisfaction for the attack on and occupation of Tartas and for the burning of the "temple" at Bourg (Bresse); (7) further extension of the time of tenure of surety-towns.

Louis refused to consider this partial cahier, on the pretext, says Haag,² that it was not becoming in subjects to treat with their king in this piecemeal way. New deputies, dispatched in the meantime by the Assembly with a subsidiary cahier, obtained a hearing by subterfuge, saying

¹ Presented to the Assembly in June and July 1618.

² *ubi supra*.

that they had a complete cahier ready for presentation. Louis rebuked the Assembly for having assumed functions which belonged alone to himself when it sent commissioners into Béarn to appease the people. Then, on the refusal of the deputies to declare that their cahier was final, he demanded that a statement on that point from the Assembly be laid before him not later than November 2.

Replying thereto the Assembly pointed out that in view of the serious responsibilities which had devolved upon it as a result of the failure of the deputies since 1616 to obtain satisfaction on any matter, it must reserve for itself entire freedom of action. It would not undertake that no further demand would be made after the presentation of the general cahier. Moreover, the general cahier itself would be presented only after an answer had been received to the preliminary cahiers already in the hands of the delegates. When these cahiers were accepted by the king four of the deputies should return to Loudun. If they were not received, all the deputies must return at once.

The king again refused to accept the cahiers (November 25) and the deputies returned to Loudun.

The gravity of the situation is now plain. Peace or war was in the hands of the Assembly. What it needed was the utmost unanimity. The nobles were consulted as well as the provincial councils. All approved of the conduct of the Assembly, and agreed that adjournment should not take place before they had received satis-

faction. The Assembly on December 7 passed a unanimous resolution that

by the Grace of God it would remain in session and not dissolve until favourable replies had been received to its just demands and grievances, nor until those things had been carried into effect which had been promised to them and were so necessary to the repose and preservation of the churches and of the members of the same, protesting before God that in this determination they had no other concern than the welfare of the king's service and the maintenance of the peace in which the churches desire to find their safety and freedom under the protection of the king.

On the same day, as a conciliatory measure, the Assembly drafted its *cahier général*. This document reached Louis on the twentieth of the month. Louis' reply was that his answer would be given within a month. Meanwhile the Assembly must nominate deputies-general and dissolve. "That the Company will never do", cried one of its number, "for its members have resolved and sworn not to separate until they have seen the reply and its effects." The bold speaker was silenced. The king promised to announce his will through special commissioners to the Assembly.

These "commissioners performed their office", says Benoit, "rather as officers serving a writ than as commissioners charged with royal instructions". They ordered the Assembly to nominate candidates for the deputy-generalship and to dissolve within a fortnight from that date (January 10, 1619). The bravado of these blustering agents did not overawe the deputies. The Vidame de Chartres (Lafin) replied for the Assembly, making thinly veiled allusions to the arch-enemy, the Jesuits. The royal commands would be obeyed with the respect that

was due to the king. The fleur-de-lys was imprinted on the breast of each of them. None of them had any part in any foreign faction. Least of all did they have any understanding with Rome or the Jesuits. The authority of the king was subject only to that of God. Their religion enjoined upon them, after their duty to God, complete obedience and faithful reverence for the king.

I speak to you not in the name of this Company alone, but in the name of a million souls to whom it is the very breath of life to distinguish themselves by lowly service as the humble servants and subjects of his Majesty.

In the afternoon the Assembly declared its determination to deal directly with Louis and dispatched a fourth deputation to the Court. "This was tantamount to open revolt against the crown; hence the Assembly deemed it advisable to appeal to public opinion. Therefore it caused to be printed a report of all that had taken place in order to send it on to the churches".¹

This deputation had an audience on January 25 (1620) and was curtly dismissed by Louis

Since you are the bearers of nothing new, nor that adds to what your preceding deputies have presented, and since through them and Le Moyne I have conveyed my will to you, obey and withdraw.

But on February 1 it was summoned to the Louvre where Condé, supported by Luynes, declared that in six months most of their demands would be satisfied. If not, a new Assembly would be sanctioned. He warned them, however, that they need expect no modification of the king's intention in regard to Béarn, but that everything would be done to ensure the rights of the Pro-

¹ Haag, 6: 206.

testants in the execution of the edict of replevin. These assurances were repeated by Lesdiguières and Châtillon. The proxies of these latter, speaking a week later to the Assembly, urged the deputies to exercise "a little patience" and to dissolve before the end of the month. La Fontan, however, attorney for Châtillon, suggested a new deputation to Louis. With this advice the seigneurs agreed and deputies were dispatched.

Scarcely had the latter, and this was the fifth deputation, left Loudun than the Assembly received news of the decree that Louis had made against them on February 26, declaring their Assembly illegal and the members guilty of treason if in three weeks' time they had not nominated their deputies-general and dissolved.

And if those of the said Assembly, so ran the declaration, who obey our present commands, of whatever number they be, before the dissolution of the same, do nominate the said deputies, it is our intention to accept the said nomination and to permit those whom we shall choose from this nomination to perform their offices near our person, according to custom.

Louis' repetition of this old ruse was not as successful in emphasizing the existing divisions within the Assembly as had been the initial attempt by the regent eight years earlier. Its fatal effects on that occasion were avoided now by the belief of the deputies that the satisfaction of their demands was within sight. For if the conduct of Condé and of Luynes were open to suspicion the solemn assertions of Lesdiguières, Châtillon and Du Plessis-Mornay carried conviction. To be sure, when the deputies became aware of the recent declaration against them, their distrust of Louis found vent

in a resolution to withdraw to La Rochelle if their deputies returned without satisfactory answers to their protests. Yet when the deputation did return (March 23) in that very condition, but bringing with them new and urgent letters from Lesdiguières and Châtillon enclosing the strongest undertakings for the fulfilment of the demands of the Assembly,¹ that body "in obedience to the peremptory command of his Majesty and without prejudice to the rights of the churches nor binding themselves for the future to nominate more than two", proceeded to the nomination. Nevertheless, it did not succeed in ridding itself of its suspicions, and on April 3 resolved to meet again in any case. In the meantime they prayed for signed authorization from the king for the convocation of a new Assembly to be summoned in six months by the province of La Rochelle, if the government had not in that time carried out its part of the compact.

With the consent of Louis, the Assembly continued in session until April 15 for the purpose of swearing in the new deputies-general, Favas and Chalas, and of giving them their instructions. In the meantime word arrived from Du Plessis-Mornay that Montbazou (father-in-law of

¹ (1) Lecture taken from Fontrailles and given to a Protestant.

(2) Protestant counsellors to be received by the Parlement of Paris.

(3) Extension of time for holding of surety-towns for 4 years from August 1, 1620. (4) Favourable reply to cahiers. (5) A supplementary grant of 15,000 crowns for the support of ministers and as much for the expenses of the Assembly. (6) The remonstrances of Béarn should be heard provided that within a month the Assembly nominate the 6 candidates for the deputy-generalship, and dissolve after the king had announced his choice of two. Cf. *Supra*, p. 142.

Luynes) had been explicitly commanded by Louis to assure him that the promises to the Assembly would be faithfully carried out. The Assembly, however, felt justified in anticipating the worst and sent down to the churches a recommendation that they should give their support to Béarn and La Force "if recourse were had against them to ways undue, illegal and extraordinary". Dissolution took place on the eighteenth.

Amid the dissensions in Court caused by the antagonism to the new favourite (de Luynes) and the second revolt of the queen, even the formal reply made by Louis to the announcement of the Assembly's accession to his demands¹ seems to convey a sense of relief at the removal of one menace to the peace of a much-distracted realm. Less than a month later, May 12, he gave a more signal evidence of his gratification by confirming the Protestants in their possession of the surety-towns for five years from January 1, 1620 and by continuing for three years longer the annual subsidy of 45,000 livres. The questions of Lectoure, of the Parlement of Paris and the Protestant counsellors remained still unsettled.

In August the treaty of Brissac brought to an end the difficulties between Marie de Médicis and her son. De Mayenne and Epemon remained in arms, however, in their respective governments of Guyenne and Saintonge. To compel the obedi-

¹ "It gives me great satisfaction that you have obeyed me. Continue to obey me and to serve me faithfully. I shall continue my affection to you, and shall maintain in good faith all that has been granted you in the edicts made in your favour."

ence of these partisans of the queen, as well as to enforce the execution of the edict of replevin in Béarn, Louis marched into Guyenne (September). At Bordeaux, whither he had summoned Fontailles, the latter gave up Lectoure. There, too, La Force received from Louis the command to have the edict verified at once. The Estates of Béarn, inspired by Favas, refused however to listen to La Force, charging him with an attempt to curry favour with the Court. They laughed at the idea of the king's coming to Béarn for the purpose of imposing his will upon that state. The Sovereign Council acted in the same spirit.

At this news Louis advanced into Béarn.¹ As he crossed the borders word was delivered to him that the Council, now convinced of the seriousness of the situation, had verified his edict. It was too late. Louis, young, handsome, happy, was eager to prove his kingship over the turbulent South. He refused to interrupt his march, and on October 15 entered Pau. Two days later de Salles, Protestant Governor of Navarreins, the great fortress of Béarn, threw open the gates of that city to receive the king. To the surprise of everyone he was rewarded for his loyalty by discharge from office ostensibly on account of his great age. A Catholic governor and a Catholic garrison were installed in the citadel and Mass was celebrated again, the first time in fifty years.

Returning to Pau, Louis, in the presence of the

¹ "Since my Council at Pau has seen fit to give me the trouble of going myself to register my edicts, I shall go and do it all the more thoroughly."

Estates, took the customary oath to observe inviolate the rights and customs of the country. Immediately thereafter he restored the bishops and abbots to their former privileges as presidents of the Estates and to their rank in the Grand Council (High Court), inferior only to the presiding officers. The next day saw the registration of the edict of reunion, uniting Navarre and Béarn, and both to the Crown. The Courts were instructed to use the French instead of the Basque tongue in their proceedings. The largest church in Pau was restored to the catholics. The Sovereign Councils of Pau and of Saint Palais were united in one Court. Finally, the native military organization (les Parsans) was suppressed and French garrisons established in the principal cities.

The revolution in Béarn was complete. The ominous words of the king had been fulfilled. His subjects in that kingdom had been restored to their "anciens privilèges". In this restoration the relative positions of Catholic and Protestant had been reversed and both had lost their ancient picturesque constitution, their independent government, and their judicial system. But a new province had been created and the Spanish frontier protected. The latter was an important consideration for France in the European struggle just commencing.

Lawlessness and violence on the part of the soldiery and common people attended this expedition of violation. According to Benoit¹ even the presence of the king did not prevent an orgy

¹ Benoit, 2: 296.

of petty persecution. The soldiers broke down the doors of the churches, demolished their walls and tore up their books. They robbed and beat the country-people who came to market, supposing that all were Huguenots. Women dared not appear in the streets. Children were abducted. Ministers were driven from their charges. Their wives were outraged. After the departure of the king these violences continued. Rumours of conspiracies were set on foot in order that the wanton acts of the soldiery and military governors might receive plausible explanation. "Under the name of conspirators so many were put to death that it might very well have been taken for a massacre rather than an example of the execution of justice."

At this critical moment in the political and religious life of Béarn and in the history of Huguenotism, the National Synod of the Churches of France was in session at Alais (October 1-December 2). The news of the king's vigorous action created in that body the liveliest excitement. The Béarn members called upon the synod to send a deputation to Louis protesting against his action. Over and over again they renewed their proposal, but over and over again it was defeated by violent opposition, "so that the least discerning recognized that there were traitors in the Company but that either information was lacking to discover them or courage to punish them".¹

Every kind of reason seems to have been alleged and to have prevailed to divert the synod from making any virile resolution in this matter. Dis-

¹ Benoit, 2: 301.

sension rent the company, and it was only with the greatest difficulty that the deplorable change which had taken place in the condition of the churches of Béarn was assigned as one of several causes that moved the synod to proclaim a public fast in Alais and to enjoin the churches of France to do the same four months later:

Since the corruption of morals and the looseness that is visible now among all classes and conditions in this kingdom furnishes us with a powerful motive for self-humiliation before God in order to avert his judgements by manifold evidences of repentance, and since the pitiable change that has taken place in the churches of Béarn and in divers other provinces forbodes the most terrible results it has been ordained that a public fast be celebrated by this company with the church of this place on Saturday next, November 14, and that all the reformed churches of the kingdom celebrate it also on the first Thursday of March next year.

For a time popular excitement was intense. The country south of the Loire was as usual especially effervescent. All summer long there was turmoil over the reports of the deputies returning from the Assembly of Loudun. Great apprehension filled men's minds at the rumours of the king's hardness towards Béarn. News of the violence at Navarreins spread rapidly and stirred up reprisals upon the Catholics in many places.¹ Local Assemblies were called in almost all the ecclesiastical provinces.² Deputations were sent from one to the other carrying statements of grievances and stirring up interest in a General Assembly. This was followed by orders for the arming of the Pro-

¹ Montauban, Nîmes, Privas, Saverdun, Cazères, Pamiers, etc. Cf. Benoit, 2: 316-320.

² Jargeau, in July; Saumur, in July; Pont de Vesle, in August; Milhau, in October.

testant population, for the repair of fortifications and the storing up of munitions of war. To Lesdiguières and Châtillon protests were sent against their failure to keep faith with the Assembly.

It was these considerations in all probability that moved Louis to complete the fulfilment of the promises made to the Assembly of Loudun.

CHAPTER IX

THE MENACE OF CIVIL WAR

The agitation that was rife throughout the country as a result of the king's action in Béarn gave apparent meaning to a baseless rumour that the Protestants contemplated a general rising. Their disaffection found voice not in rebellion but in a General Assembly at La Rochelle.

The period of six months had now elapsed during which the king had undertaken to satisfy Protestant demands or to sanction their reunion in a new political assembly. Sentiment throughout the churches seemed to demand that convocation as a remonstrance against their unequal treatment. The king's ominous march into Guyenne ostensibly to wrest Lectoure from Fontrailles, there to instal a Protestant governor, in execution of his promise, was being followed by his penetration into Béarn and his arbitrary action there in defiance of his given word that that province should first be consulted before the adoption of any action towards the execution of the edict of replevin.

Apparently the Court had determined to ignore Protestant opinion and feeling. This was the very situation anticipated by the retiring Assembly of Loudun when it empowered the city of La Rochelle to convoke the new Assembly "failing the complete execution of what had been promised". Favas, a deputy-general of the churches, had

written to the magistrates of that city that the Court had no intention of carrying out its undertaking and advised the summoning of the Assembly. La Rochelle had no mind to shirk its responsibility. Nevertheless it had some sense of the gravity of the situation. It first consulted Du Plessis-Mornay and Rohan. Both suggested that Lesdiguières and Châtillon, who had pledged the faith of Condé and Luynes and through them of the king himself, should demand of Louis the fulfilment of his word. This prudent advice did not commend itself to the people of La Rochelle, and a committee was appointed to inquire into the situation. On the advice of this body (October 14) notice was sent to the provinces that an Assembly would open on November 25 following.

The king had twice warned the Rochellese of the dangerous folly of their course. On October 15, the day after the magistrates had reached their momentous decision, his deputy arrived at La Rochelle with threats and promises: threats of punishment if they persisted in their course, promises that what undertakings had been given to the Assembly of Loudun would be executed. Prior to this, too, he had commanded Favas to counsel the Rochellese not to summon an Assembly, an order which Favas, full of avarice and ambition and filled with resentment against the Protestants because of their refusal to recommend his son for the governorship of Lectoure, communicated to them, but which he violated by "neglecting nothing that would embitter men's minds and drive them to war". When these warnings passed unheeded

by the recalcitrant city, the king before leaving Béarn declared (Granada, October 22) the Assembly illegal, forbade the citizens of La Rochelle to admit it within their walls and ordered the tribunals to proceed with the full rigour of the law against the infractors of this edict.

This declaration led Du Plessis-Mornay to appeal to Montbazou for confirmation of his statement of the previous spring. The resulting dispute over what had been promised, or what had not, lasted for two months. In the meantime the king had redeemed his promises to the Assembly at Loudun: a Protestant, Bleinville, had replaced Fontrailles in the governorship of Lectoure; the Parlement of Paris had admitted the two Protestant magistrates; the patent for the holding of the surety-towns had been signed. These acts had been performed, however, in such a way as to rob the Protestants of all satisfaction in them. Fontrailles had received a gift of 50,000 livres so that his retirement seemed to be the reward of a faithful servant of the Crown rather than the punishment of a disturber of the public peace. Bleinville, who replaced him, was not supported by the Protestants and was even suspected of being more friendly to the Court than to his religious kindred. The installation of the magistrates by the Parlement of Paris was declared to be a matter of expediency rather than of justice and was accompanied by nugatory restrictions. The patent concerning the surety-towns was signed but not delivered. Thus not only was injury done to the

amour-propre of the Huguenots but justice was turned into a mockery.

In the face of these exasperations and of those others throughout the provinces¹ which were of daily occurrence and which testified to the intolerance of Catholic and Protestant alike, the magistrates of La Rochelle decided that, despite the king's proclamation, they could not countermand their order for the meeting of an Assembly. Du Plessis-Mornay did not see how it could now be prevented. Their only safety lay in the election of moderate delegates.

The deputies were slow to arrive. Their tardiness delayed the opening until Christmas. On December 25 forty submitted their credentials and took the usual oath of union. About one-quarter of these were ministers. The remainder were commoners. While deputies continued to arrive there was no such authoritative mandate as that represented by the impressive Assemblies of previous years.

The nobles held aloof. Not one appeared in person. Their absence was to be explained only by hostility to the policy of the Assembly. Lesdiguières wrote: "The reasons for your assemblies are of the slightest. I urge you to dissolve for unless you do I shall, to my very great regret, see myself robbed of every means of influencing the king in your favour". Rohan, La Trémouille and La Force alone sent representatives. Even these declared their disagreement with the course adopted by their fellow-religionists and urged the Assembly

¹ Cf. Benoit 2: 316 ff.

to disband. Du Plessis-Mornay attempted mediation, but his proposals roused against him the suspicions of those whom he wished to serve. The Assembly scornfully rejected his suggestion, declaring that they would communicate with Louis only through their own deputies. On his side Louis persisted in refusing to recognize the existence of the Assembly. Condé and Luynes were urging upon him the destruction of the Huguénots so that his hands would be free from complications at home for the prosecution of a vigorous policy abroad.

When after more than two months' struggle the disagreement between the Assembly and the nobles had reached a climax, the latter held a conference at Niort (March 2 and 3, 1621) for the purpose of discussing the situation and bringing greater pressure to bear upon the Assembly. To this conference had been invited delegates from the Assembly. Six were sent. The result was entirely discomfiting for the peacemakers. La Trémouille, Rohan and Soubise, moved by the greater enthusiasm of some of the Assembly's delegates, particularly Château-neuf, were converted to their cause, and resolved to support it without reserve. A moment later they regretted their too hasty decision and through their proxies urged the Assembly to dissolve. But that body re-affirmed its determination to remain in session. Rohan, too proud to break his sworn word, however dark the adventure, stood by the Assembly, the greatness of the peril exercising a sombre attraction over that intrepid soul.

While the nobles were thus unanimously in favour of peace and were leaving no stone unturned

to procure it, the deputies, now 57 in number, representative of every province except Dauphiné, warmly supported by a faction in La Rochelle, were making a brave show of independence. Their first acts were calculated to guard against the formation of any cabals. It was decided that the executive officers should be elected monthly and that no individual could hold office during two consecutive months. Of greater significance still was the decision to vote as individuals, not as provinces. Although the deputies were expected to vote in accordance with the instructions of their constituencies, the Assembly hoped by this arrangement to nullify the effects of any plots that might be instigated by the nobles or by the Court for the paralysis of its movements. It was a Committee of Public Safety.

The remonstrance that was immediately prepared presented the Protestant apologia. It rehearsed their disappointments, and their persecutions.¹ Louis refused to receive it, telling Favas that any request from the Churches must be presented in his own name as deputy-general. The substance of the cahier, then, in his own name, Favas presented some days later. At its terms Louis showed himself highly indignant. He declared that the Assembly would never receive recognition and that if Favas had any representations to make concerning the execution of the edicts, he should present a memoir of the same.

Again the Assembly sent Favas back to Louis to speak as its agent. Again Louis refused to hear

¹ Cf. Haag 2: 238.

him. Then the Assembly capitulated. Favas was ordered to speak as deputy-general, not in the name of the Assembly but as the representative of all the churches, and to present to the king a cahier newly prepared and differing from the former in minor respects. The king's offer, by way of reply, to grant a free pardon in case of immediate dissolution was promptly rejected.

These futile negotiations consumed three months. During that time the Assembly had prepared itself for the worst. Ignoring repeated deputations from the nobles, disregarding growing dissension within its own ranks, careless of the increasing coldness and indifference of the churches, heedless of its isolation, driven by discontented spirits, it prepared for war as if it were not cut off from all of those resources whose sympathetic and complete co-operation indeed might not have succeeded in saving from disaster both itself and that great community whose interests it pretended to serve. Lacking such support, defeat was a foregone conclusion. It created the very situation for which its enemies were lying in wait. Political tendencies might have swept away the Protestant organization in any case, but in the meantime its only safety lay in submissiveness. But the Assembly was in no compliant humour. As early as January 4 it had notified the strongholds that defended La Rochelle and lined the course of the Loire, that they should put themselves in readiness for any emergency. Four days later a general order to the same effect was dispatched to all the provinces. On March 26 orders were issued to increase

the garrison of Maillezais by 200 men "with as little noise as possible so that no one could take umbrage thereat nor interpret the levy as a hostile act". A commission of four members was named for the purpose of "receiving such secret information as might concern the general good as well as the good of individual churches".

When the king answered the Assembly's challenge by raising an army, the latter looked to its own safety by the putting on a war footing of the surety-towns in its vicinity.¹

This determined demeanour might have been justifiable while certain difficulties remained unsettled. But by the middle of March many events had occurred that should have exercised a soothing influence upon these unhappy spirits, or that should have brought to its senses an Assembly that was gradually alienating from itself the bulk of Protestant opinion. In the first place, Louis, plainly disquieted at the prospect of the augmentation of his anxieties by a general Protestant rising, had caused the registration in January of the patent concerning the surety-towns² as well as that which authorized to them an increase of 45,000 livres in the annual grant for the support of ministers and schools, thus putting into effect promises of nearly a year's standing. Here were two grievances settled.

In the second place, the Parlement of Paris had finally yielded to royal pressure and had received

¹ Pons, Royan, Saint-Jean, Fontenay, Bergerac, Vezins.

² Prolonging the lease for five years, granted May 12, 1620, but not before executed.

the two Protestant councillors. The Béarn incident, the immediate cause of the Assembly's existence, had been practically closed in February by the flight into Guyenne of the governor (La Force) and the incontinent surrender of one city after another before the threatening advance of d'Epernon. A month later Béarn had withdrawn the question from controversy by the acceptance of the situation and unwillingness to continue the struggle. "Those who had begun the dance were the first to break off." With the death of opposition in Béarn, disappeared the capital reason for the existence of the Assembly. On that head its mouth was shut.

What then was that for which the Protestants, or rather the Assembly, proposed to fight? What grievances remained of such grave importance as to seem worth the risk of war? It was represented that faith had not been kept with Béarn nor with the Assembly in that matter. But the Edict of Nantes had been applied to Béarn and the Béarnese were to all intents and purposes content. It seemed then that the Assembly had no case. They protested against the giving of Le Coq's seat in the Parlement of Paris to a Catholic, when that magistrate was converted to protestantism, although his continuance in his magistracy meant a third Protestant in the court instead of two as stipulated in the Edict. They asked again that the word *prétendue* be dropped from the phrase that was employed in all formal documents to describe protestantism, *religion prétendue réformée*. They asked that La Force be retained as Governor of

Béarn, while to the Crown it appeared as if La Force had been the very soul of resistance in that province. They asked for a reply to the cahiers presented by the Assembly of Loudun; that the payment of grants to garrisons and ministers be made promptly; that the *places de sureté* in Dauphiné taken from them under Lesdiguières be restored; that seditious preaching by Catholics be stopped; that the commissioners appointed to administer the Edict be ordered to act without fear or favour; that the Declaration against the Assembly be withdrawn.

Such were the complaints of the Assembly as embodied in the cahier to Louis of March 18. The most serious article of all was that which protested against the monarch's broken pledges in regard to Béarn. But by the consent of the Béarnese that issue was dead. Was this then a legitimate cause for strife? Leaving out of account the Béarn question, which had settled itself, which one of these complaints was new or which one of them was vital? Money payments, especially for the maintenance of great citadels and garrisons, had always been in arrears, even under Henry IV. That monarch himself had grown impatient with and suspicious of the Huguenots' obstinate attachment to the surety-towns and had attempted more than once to withdraw these from their possession.

In regard to the epithet *prétendue* as applied to their religion, was this more objectionable now than at any time during the past fifty years? What made this abuse and all other abuses suddenly so acute and intolerable? Grievous as they were, did

they warrant war? Or suppose that war could have cleared up once and for all every Protestant grievance, a prospect that alone would have rendered their attitude reasonable, was the Assembly in a position to carry on a successful struggle? To achieve nothing more than the exact execution of the Edict of Nantes there was need of an organization not merely of the national machinery of justice and police which the Crown had never yet been able to work out. There was need above all of a change in the national temper, a conversion of the national heart to tolerance, a conversion involving Protestant as well as Catholic.

Great sympathy must be felt with the Protestants because of the bear-baiting to which they were constantly subjected. But it is to be remembered that those who were the victims of this petty persecution, the Protestants as a body, did not want war. It became more and more evident as time passed that the mass of the people sided with the nobles rather than with the Assembly. Benoit¹ estimates that only about one-eighth of the Protestant population supported the Assembly's policy.

For this lukewarmness various reasons are to be found. It is not at all sufficient to say that emissaries of Court and Church were actively debauching the Protestant mind. First and foremost in this pacific disposition is to be reckoned the contentment of the greater number of the communion. On the whole they had been well treated by the government of Louis XIII. The Edict still remained their great palladium and it

¹ Benoit, 2: 355.

had been administered with much integrity and loyalty.¹ Among the people there was a growing charity and a feeling that "war, fire, murder, blood were not the proper remedy to cure the diseases of heresy".² Fanatical passion was easily aroused but in many places Protestant and Catholic were living side by side in increasing mutual confidence and helpfulness. The watchfulness and promptitude of certain of the governors, as for example Montmorency in Languedoc and Longueville in Normandy, contributed also to the maintenance of order by checking the more impulsive, while the vigorous preparations of the king, coupled with his declaration (April) against those who participated in the disturbances awed the more timid and tended to counteract the influence and intrigues of the Assembly. It was not then the churches that wanted war. It was their political representatives at La Rochelle.

It was the weakness of that body, however, that not having taken serious account of its resources, it greatly overestimated its own strength. It doubly weakened its position, too, by grossly

¹ Car si dans le royaume, il se trouve contravention ou inexécution, et s'il y avait quelque sujet de plainte, ç'a été pour choses si légères, que l'on ne doit pas en attribuer le manquement à sa Majesté, mais plutôt à la mauvaise volonté d'aucuns particuliers tant d'une que d'autre religion, qui, portés de mauvaise inclination les uns contre les autres, ou de désir de remuement et désordre, commettent des insolences qui touchent plutôt les particuliers que le public, et lesquelles sont entièrement désagréables à sa Majesté, mais dont la réparation ne se peut faire toujours si promptement qu'elle désirerait. Bouchitté, p. 17.

² Floquet, 4: 379-80.

undervaluing the power and determination of the king. Indignant at the perfidy of the Court, hypersensitive as to its own dignity, smarting under the criminilizing declarations that had been launched against it, fearful of the penalties by which it was menaced, eager to obtain recognition, swayed by those whose interest was entirely selfish, it failed to realize the utter indifference of the mass of the Protestants to these questions that had been so long the subject of debate as to have become in a measure academic. Nor did it realize sufficiently the overwhelming mass of determinedly hostile opinion by which it was opposed. Its everlasting complaints fell upon unsympathetic ears and aroused no corresponding echoes in the heart of a nation that saw in the Protestant only a pestilent and incorrigible heretic bent perversely upon his own damnation and the ruin of the state in spite of the active and passive efforts of law, society and church to save him.

The Assembly, then, misjudged the case. It is not to be credited with a wisdom and purpose beyond that of the nobles who flew to arms on the slightest personal pretext because the central power was not yet strong enough to resist rebellion, and rebellion, in the case of the great lords, generally brought reward. At this moment Guise, Nevers, Mayenne and Soissons were in revolt. Their example was infectious. The Assembly acted in the same feudal manner. It proscribed those of its own company who would not agree with it and it did not hesitate to incur great expense for it was sure of compensation if its demands were successful.

However intent upon war, the Assembly might have found in its financial condition a deterrent from precipitate courses. Far from it! Its extreme poverty does not seem to have modified nor to have delayed its action. It ignored as far as possible any divergence of opinion, and shut its eyes to its failure to impose its authority upon the provinces. It acted as if fully confident that the entire resources of protestantism were at its disposal. Yet to what miserable expedients it was obliged to resort! In the beginning it had borrowed money from La Rochelle to defray the expenses even of its messengers. As time passed, recourse was had to shifts of every kind to provide itself with funds for the liquidation of current expenses. Appeals that were disappointingly unproductive were sent out to the churches, these being assured that the Assembly "had nothing else in view than the devising of means for their conservation against the enterprises and machinations of those who sought their ruin". Loans were negotiated here and there. Collections were taken in foreign countries.

When war was definitely undertaken, the question was simpler. As was natural and habitual in the case of all these rebellions in which the rebels of whatever stripe, princes or whatnot, pretended that they struggled not against the king but against his enemies in high places, at his right hand, at his council board, and elsewhere, the royal and ecclesiastical revenues were seized where possible and applied to the maintenance of the organization, but in the interim the treasury was empty. Their

sources of income were few and dubious. Their expedients were pitiful. How heroic their misery had it been in a better cause!

Every consideration made resistance seem madness, but new injuries provoked the Assembly to the extremity. Several of its deputies were executed in effigy by the Parlement of Bordeaux, and one, Châteauneuf (President of the Assembly in January and again in April) was condemned to be beheaded. From every side came evidence that Louis was bent on forcing obedience. A special edict provided the necessary funds for the waging of war "against rebels within the kingdom and without", which the Assembly rightly conjectured meant itself. At the same time a blow had been aimed at the Assembly's resources by the transference to royal cities of the revenue offices of the surety-towns of Poitou and of La Rochelle itself. These offices had been set up by the Edict in all towns held by Protestants for the purpose of providing moneys for the maintenance of their garrisons. Under ordinary circumstances Louis' interference was in direct violation of the Edict, but, when the Assembly itself was in full revolt and was raising money and men by the employment of any means within its power, there is something humorous in its remonstrance (March 24) against this action of its sovereign.

While d'Epernon was crushing the resistance of La Force in Béarn, the king's army was marching into Poitou. In Normandy, de Longueville quietly disarmed the Protestants. A collision between the adherents of the two religions in Tours resulted

in the burning of the "temple", the despoiling of the cemetery and the killing of several Huguenots, an act which Louis avenged by hanging four or five of the aggressors, all Catholics. Similar outrages occurred elsewhere.¹ In Languedoc Montmorency, eager to prevent the sending of assistance to La Force, attacked and captured Vallon, while the king's troops were now before St. Jean d'Angéli, 45 miles from La Rochelle. Peace then was no longer possible. The Assembly, excusing itself for not first consulting the provinces before arrogating to itself functions not contemplated in its first warrant, and "considering the imperative need for succouring the oppressed churches of Béarn and Vivarais," drew up its celebrated *Règlement*,² which organized the resources of protestantism for war.

The Grand *Règlement*, as it was sometimes called, is a comparatively simple document of forty-seven articles, providing for the recruiting, command and discipline of the army, the conduct and financing of the war, and the making of peace. It was prepared before April 24, but was not presented to the Assembly until May 10 following. The intervening time had been occupied with the hearing of proposals concerning peace, introduced first by a deputy of Lesdiguières, and then by La Trémouille and Rohan. By its provisions France was divided into eight military

¹ In Poitiers, Croisic, Mauzé, and other places. Cf. Benoit, 2: 347.

² L'ordre et règlement général de milices et de finances pour les églises réformées de France et souveraineté de Béarn.

districts,¹ the division being carried out according to the number and location of churches, that is by a grouping of Synods. Since there were few churches, perhaps 50 out of 760, in Picardy, Champagne, the Nivernais, the Bourbonnais, Marche, Limousin, Auvergne and Lyonnais, these were not included in the military plan. From this arrangement also the city of La Rochelle was definitely excluded. It remained under the command of its mayor. Each district was placed under a separate commander.² Supreme command was vested in the duc de Bouillon. Councils of war were established in each district, to consist of the chiefs of the district army staff and three representatives from each provincial council in that district, the latter to be changed every three months. A supreme council was formed by the commander-in-chief, the chiefs of his Staff and three deputies from the General Assembly, the same provisions being made in regard to these deputies as in the case of the civil members of the district councils.

The Assembly kept in its own hands the appointment of the commander-in-chief, the district commanders, and certain other specified posts; it issued all commissions; it retained general

¹ Sometimes spoken of as Cercles. But the Cercle of the "ordre" of 1611 was quite a different thing.

² Normandie, Ile-de-France, Berry, Anjou, Maine, Perche, Touraine (except Ile-Bouchard) were commanded by the duc de Bouillon; Ile-Bouchard, Bretagne, Lodunois and Poitou by the duc de Soubise; Haut Languedoc and Haute Guyenne by the duc de Rohan; Bas Languedoc, Cévennes, Gevaudan, Vivarais by the comte de Châtillon; Dauphiné, Provence, Bourgogne by the duc de Lesdiguières.

control of the finances and payment of the men; it alone possessed the right to agree to a truce or to conclude a peace. The Provincial Councils were continued in their existing form. Their functions now included nominations for the guidance of the district commanders and of the General Assembly to governorships of surety-towns where such posts were at present vacant, or should become so, as well as the appointment, in conjunction with provincial commanders, of financial agents and the care of the army rolls.

The articles which related to the discipline of the army recall Coligny's ordinances of sixty years earlier. These made all commanders, captains and soldiers amenable to ecclesiastical discipline and sought to produce "such Christian and discreet deportment in their actions that God would be honoured thereby and each of them edified in all piety by a good life and conversation". Preachers were provided. Swearing was to be punished; plundering and excesses of all kinds were forbidden; millers and traders were put under special protection that their business might not be interrupted.

The clauses relating to finance provided for the diversion of the royal revenues into the hands of the Assembly "for the maintenance of the forces and other public affairs". The moneys accruing from this source were to be supplemented by the appropriation of the revenues of the Catholic Church, by booty taken and by ransom money.

Such was the notorious document in which the Catholics saw the "fundamental laws of the republic

of the Protestants", and which became at once the foundation for the charge, from which they were never able to free themselves, that, like the Estates General in the Low Countries, they purposed founding a state within the state. A seal that they devised, engraved *Pro Christo et Rege*, for the purpose of authenticating their Commissions and other Acts lent colour to this reproach. From the obloquy of that accusation they were not to be saved by any easy protest of determination always to live "in most humble subjection to their God-given king". "The question reduces itself to this", says Benoit, "had the reformers any reason for taking up arms? That once granted, it cannot be imputed to them as a crime either that they made laws for their association or that they adopted a seal as a general symbol for identification". But let Benoit be answered by the Protestants themselves. The rank and file refused to respond to the Assembly's summons. Bouillon declined the general command on the ground of age and illness. Lesdiguières, as in 1616, joined the king and was the commander of the royal forces during many of the operations in the ensuing campaign against his fellow religionists. The La Forces were already expelled from Béarn. Châtillon and La Trémouille were less than half-hearted in a cause which they were soon to abandon. Only Rohan was left. Thus the Grand Règlement became a pathetic document, the constitution of a lost cause, and the republic, if dreamed of, was a paper state without substance or spirit.

CHAPTER X

THE FIRST HUGUENOT RISING

In the "Grand Règlement" (May 10, 1621) the Assembly furnished to its enemies the very occasion which they had long desired. A war against protestantism upon religious grounds alone could not have been undertaken.¹ A war against a political faction dispelled every scruple. No moment could have been less opportune for the Huguenots or more favourable for the Crown. Within the kingdom every other faction was still. Without protestantism was at its nadir. The clergy, jubilant over the turn of events in Béarn, called loudly for the extermination of heresy and were ready to contribute largely to the holy war.

¹ "If his Holiness brings up the question of the suggested enterprise against Geneva to which by special messenger a few months ago he invited his Majesty, he will be made to understand as was frankly declared to the Papal nuncio and to Father Barnabite who came expressly to discuss that question, that this would be the very way to thwart the plans of his Majesty in his realm for putting a stop to the rumor published abroad by malicious persons to the effect that in the war now being waged against his rebellious subjects it is religion and not faction that he is attacking . . . his Majesty having always informed them that his action is directed simply against disobedience and has no religious meaning whatever and that if any of his Catholic subjects should happen to rise in rebellion he would treat them in exactly the same way in the interests of peace and the strengthening of his authority." Richelieu to Sillery, Mar. 3, 1622, quoted in La Garde.

Louis took up the gage. He disposed his forces so that he completely controlled the situation north of the Loire where Condé, Saint Pol, Mayenne and Longueville, having made themselves masters of all the surety-towns, spread fear through the churches by the disarming of the Protestants. The troops that had been used for the subjugation of Béarn were still in Guyenne or Poitou. These Louis ordered to watch Saint-Jean d'Angély where hostilities first broke out. He himself set out from Paris, April 29. Sailing down the Loire through Orleans, Blois and Tours he entered Saumur (May 11) which, by a signal act of treachery, he withdrew from the hands of Du Plessis-Mornay, its governor for the last thirty-two years.

Saumur was the strongest of the fortresses that commanded the crossing of the Loire, and by that fact was one of the most important of the Huguenot cities. It had been given by Henry III as a surety-town to Henry of Navarre in 1589. In the same year Du Plessis-Mornay was made its governor. That appointment was twice confirmed, first in 1598, last in 1610. No shadow of suspicion had ever rested upon his title. He had all too little cause at this time to suspect any perfidy on the part of the king, since he had again and again incurred the ill-will of the Assembly by his proposals of reconciliation. Moreover Louis had expressly assured him through the favourite Luynes, through Lesdiguières, and again through his son-in-law Villarnoul that no change was contemplated in Saumur. Thus reassured Mornay threw open the city's gates. Louis, having heard that

the Assembly had decided to send Soubise with reinforcements to Saumur, ordered Mornay to withdraw from the castle, of which he himself at once took possession, alleging that this was in the best interests of all concerned. Then Louis announced that his guard would remain in possession for three months under the orders of the Count de Sault, grandson of Lesdiguières, "chosen expressly to sugar the pill because he made profession of the religion". Mornay's expostulations were in vain. He saw the dishonour which was being put upon him and remained proudly incorruptible, refusing money, honours, even the marshal's baton, every blandishment, indeed, that a faithless monarch could use to soothe a subject's vanity. On May 18 he left Saumur with a written promise from Louis that he would be restored to the governorship not later than August 17. On September 18 Louis urged him to have "a little patience". Then he was put off until a general peace was concluded. Peace having been signed, Louis renewed an offer previously made to buy from him the governorship. One year later Du Plessis accepted one hundred thousand livres for the government of Saumur, for furniture that had been destroyed and for books that had been lost, and died (Nov. 4, 1623) without having seen Saumur again. Not the least melancholy feature of this incident was the embitterment of the last relations between Mornay and the Assembly of La Rochelle. For the latter the surrender of Saumur was an act of treachery. It was not to be believed that Mornay was so naïve as to allow

himself to be seduced by the betrayer of Béarn and of de Salles, governor of Navarreins.

Leaving Saumur on May 17, Louis swept onward through Poitou, where his approach was the signal for the incontinent surrender of one city after another, not a blow having been struck.

At Niort, which opened its gates to him, Louis published a decree (May 27) repeating the assurances given by the declaration of April 24 preceding to those who remained obedient and loyal but declaring all those who reside or have taken refuge in La Rochelle and Saint-Jean d'Angély as well as others who countenance them directly or indirectly or who have association or correspondence with them or who recognize the authority of the Assembly of La Rochelle or other Assemblies held without our express permission, as refractory, disobedient and guilty of high treason in the first degree

and ordered

that all our subjects of the said religion, gentlemen and others of whatever quality, make a written declaration before the presidial magistrates disavowing the Assembly of La Rochelle.

Urged on by the deputy-general Favas, who was just now the stormy petrel of the Huguenots, the Assembly rejected all suggestions of mediation and continued its preparations to resist the king's advance. It borrowed money, levied taxes on shipping along the Garonne, sent appeals for help to England and Holland and ordered the southern provinces to take up arms so as to relieve the pressure upon "Soubise and a host of other nobles besieged in Saint-Jean". It hastened what reinforcements it could muster to the towns immediately threatened by the king's movements.¹

¹ Saint-Jean, Pons, Marans, la Garnache. v. Anquez, 352-3.

But, as has been seen, protestantism had no stomach for this struggle. The Assembly could count among all its captains on the loyalty of only Rohan, Soubise¹ and La Force. They, in the face of warnings from the king, adhered to the *Cause*.

Soubise, commander in Bretagne and Poitou, had retired to Saint-Jean d'Angély, an outpost of La Rochelle. There for almost a month he presented a stubborn resistance to the assaults of the king's army. The attack began on May 29. It was directed against the suburbs which Soubise had already partially destroyed by fire. On June 1 five heavy batteries began the bombardment of the city. Two days later the first assault was delivered. Women and men vied with each other in a heroic defense. Their sacrifices were bootless. On June 17 the explosion of a mine opened a breach in the walls. In the ensuing assault Hautefontaine, tutor of the Rohans, "the soul of the defense", was killed. His loss disheartened the defenders. Famine finished their discouragement. On June 23 the gates were thrown open to the besiegers. Louis spared the garrison and inhabitants on oath that they would not again bear arms against him. The city, of which Rohan was governor, and about which lingered many Huguenot memories was deprived of its privileges and its defences were demolished.

Leaving d'Epéron to threaten La Rochelle, Louis, under the direction of Luynes who was now

¹ Soubise was the younger brother of Rohan and an equally ardent supporter of protestantism.

in high feather, pushed on through Angoumois and Saintonge into Guyenne, where La Force after his expulsion from Béarn was waging a losing fight against the army of Mayenne, his energies weakened by the jealousy of de Boisse-Pardaillan. As the king advanced the local Protestant leaders hastened to make peace with him. The example of Du Plessis-Mornay was more potent than the censures passed upon him by the Assembly. "Intrigue was more active than the sword." "The governors of the surety-towns along the king's route surrendered their places as easily as Du Plessis, but with more selfish prudence. Each one made sure of recompense for his cowardice; and this traffic had such a vogue during this war that perhaps nobody gave up his place to the king without deriving profit from it."¹ Niort had already been given up by Parabère before the attack on Saint-Jean. During the siege of the latter place, La Trémouille, commander for the Assembly in Saintonge and Angoumois, delivered up Taillebourg; Châteauneuf handed over Pons; Talensac surrendered Fontenay; Panissault betrayed La Force and opened the gates of Bergerac; Lusignan abandoned Puymirol;² Favas, deputy-general, who was largely responsible for the uncompromising attitude of the Assembly, "ordered his sons to surrender Casteljalous and Castets, two surety-towns, twelve or fifteen miles distant from his Majesty's line of march", although he had pro-

¹ Benoit, 2: 359.

² The king failing to pay the stipulated price, Lusignan returned to protestantism.

mised the Assembly to detain Louis at least a month at Castets; Castelnau gave up Mont-de-Marsan; Pardaillan, jealous of La Force, abandoned the cause and carried with him a score of towns. "In short of all that great province (Guyenne) only Nérac and Clairac made any show of resistance. The latter, well fortified, garrisoned and provisioned but torn by discord, surrendered (August 4) after a twelve days' siege." For its contumacy, a consul, a minister, and a *procureur* were hung. Others, seeking to escape from the city were drowned in the river Lot, "as if pursued by the vengeance of God", says Richelieu, "in default of that of the king".

Thus far the king's advance had been a kind of triumphal progress. "Everything bent before the fortune of his arms." About fifty of the Protestant strongholds had fallen into his hands, for the most part without a struggle. As these towns made submission they were dismantled and their walls were rased. In those isolated cases in which resistance had been offered, at least one, more generally several persons were hanged as a punishment for the civic crime.

Dazzled by these successes, Louis, listening to the counsels of the new Constable, Luynes, and heedless of the warnings of his generals, moved in the direction of Montauban with a formidable army of about thirty-thousand men.

The south of France had now been in eruption for over two years. Disturbances had begun in Privas in the latter part of 1619. The city of Privas

had adopted protestantism sixty years before and the inhabitants were Protestant to a man.¹ Now it saw itself about to come under the domination of a Catholic through the marriage of the widow of the late Baron of Chambaud, a Protestant, with the Vicomte of Cheylane, a Catholic. The union was favoured by the king but the inhabitants rose in revolt, all the more embittered because Cheylane's family had once been Protestant. At their head was Baron de Brison, son-in-law of Chambaud. The Cercle of the lower provinces supported the rising. Cheylane called upon the Catholics for help. After several collisions the cause of the city was espoused by its neighbours and the conflagration spread through the whole region. Montmorency, Governor of Languedoc, attempted to restore order but he was not willing to recognize the claims of the Protestants and by his partiality and cruelty he made matters worse. Then the Protestants appealed to the king but without success. A National Synod in session at Alais encouraged and supported them. The Assembly of La Rochelle "embraced their cause as involving the general interest and promised all assistance possible". Stimulated by this resolution and in spite of orders from the king and the intervention of the Parlement of Paris, Brison renewed his attack upon the château and forced Cheylane to capitulate. Lesdiguières, the Protestant governor of Dauphiny, about to exchange his protestantism for a marshal's baton, exerted himself to the utmost

¹ "In the city in question there isn't a single inhabitant who is a Catholic." De Loge to Pontchartrain, Sept. 2, 1620.

to restore order. He made a trip to Paris (March 7, 1621) but gained nothing. The journey had occupied him a month and hardly had he returned before the king was marching upon La Rochelle. It was at this stage that the Assembly summoned the south to arms in order to create a diversion in favour of Soubise and the beleaguered cities of the west.

Thus in the south, the outbreak of civil war found the adherents of the two faiths already in arms and arrayed against each other. Excitement over the king's action in Béarn was at fever heat and was not allayed by the reports of the deputies after the dissolution of the Assembly of Loudun.¹ The belligerent spirit of the Assembly of La Rochelle hastened the military preparations of the provincial Assemblies and these awaited impatiently the arrival of their various commanders.

Having left protestantism disarmed in the north and having defeated it in the west, Louis now brought the war into the south and was marching through Upper Languedoc to make an attack upon Montauban.

It was the opinion of some of the king's Council that the lesser towns of the province should be reduced first so that Montauban would be left isolated and without hope of reinforcement, in which case the city "would infallibly fall of itself before the winter was past". Others advised an immediate attack upon the city, believing that swiftness of movement, combined with under-

¹ v. *supra* p. 153.

standings which existed with certain traitors among the Huguenots themselves, would compel early surrender. The latter advice prevailed and the king marched straight upon Montauban.

Montauban was a tempting bait. Its entire population had accepted the ideas of reform in 1558, and it had become at once the great centre and fortress of protestantism in the south. Its downfall meant the subjugation of the southern provinces. Ill provided with artillery, it seemed not to be in a position to make a stout resistance against forces such as the king had at his command. Its garrison consisted of 4,500 regular troops in addition to a citizen soldiery of between two and three thousand well armed men. It was provisioned to withstand a six months' siege. Nor was the city isolated. It was shut off from the cities to the north, west and south that had opened their gates to Louis, but from the great Huguenot population lying to the east, men and provisions were to be had through an investment that was not complete.

Rohan, within whose command Montauban was situated, had little anticipated the swiftness of the king's advance. Since leaving Saint-Jean d'Angély and La Rochelle he had been occupied in an attempt to neutralize the sinister influence of Pardaillan and to reestablish La Force in his command of Lower Guyenne. Now he hastened to Montauban. His very presence did much to tranquillize the minds of the inhabitants and to relieve the depression that had seized magistrates and people alike as they became aware of the astounding

defection of the cities of the west. At a great mass meeting the whole population, in a movement of exaltation to which they had been raised by the passion of Rohan, swore to defend the city to the last and to die rather than abandon the common cause. Rohan then, having first strengthened the old fortifications and constructed new, and having organized the defensive forces under the command of the Count d'Orval, son-in-law of La Force and son of Sully, set out about the middle of July for Milhau, from which place he sent to Lower Languedoc in the hope of recruiting there those reinforcements for the little army of Montauban which he was unable to raise in his own Cercle.¹

The district commander under the Assembly in Lower Languedoc and the Cévennes was Gaspard, Comte de Châtillon, nephew of the great Coligny. Châtillon had been long suspected of lukewarmness in the Huguenot cause. His conduct earlier in the year on the occasion of Montmorency's attack upon Vallon had strengthened these suspicions. Now he did his utmost to thwart Rohan's purpose. The latter, then, having got together some 3,000 men, and fearing that Châtillon would recall these troops, succeeded in having a statute passed by the Provincial Assembly held at Anduze, representing Lower Languedoc, the Cévennes and Vivarais, to the effect that no attention should be paid to any order from Châtillon for the recall of these troops,

¹ "From the whole of Upper Languedoc he (Rohan) did not succeed in recruiting quite thirty nobles and two hundred footmen." Rohan, *Mémoires*, 526.

and authorizing Rohan to make such future levies as might be deemed necessary.

To the General Assembly's criticism of his action, Châtillon replied by accusing Rohan of selfish motives and protesting his own "full and firm determination to remain inseparably attached to the establishing of the repose and safety of the churches".¹ But not even a campaign that he undertook shortly afterwards (August) and which ended in the capture of three small towns, could overcome the bad impression made by his previous conduct. In October he was deprived of office by the Assembly of Nîmes because "he sought to separate the provinces from the General Assembly and had treated openly with our enemies and had given to the Court the impression that it was within his power to deliver up some of the towns that we hold as surety". An attempt was made soon thereafter to arrest him, his son and his mother-in-law at Montpellier. But Châtillon escaped and joined Louis. In the following February he received the marshal's baton and became the bitter enemy of his former friends, waging war against them from Aigues-Mortes.

In the meantime Montauban was engaged in a desperate effort to withstand the attack of the king. La Force with his two sons had thrown himself into the city. To him d'Orval had yielded the command. Du Puy, the first consul, was made

¹ Châtillon and others who were only half-hearted in the *cause* were called popularly *escambarlats* or 'turn-coats'. It was spelled also *escambarliats* and *escambarlots*.

a sort of minister of munitions. He organized the civil population for the production of food stuffs and ammunition, for the care of the wounded and for the general policing of the city. The minister Chamier with twelve others¹ who found themselves for the moment within the walls, exerted themselves by example and exhortation to sustain the spirit of the defenders. During the course of the siege Chamier was killed as he rushed to the defence of one of the bastions (October). A plot to betray the city into the hands of the king was discovered and its authors hanged.

Luynes, having made himself master of the small towns in the immediate vicinity of Montauban, with the exception of St. Antoine, divided his army into three divisions, one of which was commanded by Lesdiguières, and attacked on three sides (August 29). Forty-five cannon thundered upon the place. Assault after assault was launched against the outworks. The besiegers were full of confidence² but lacked organization and direction. The attack became a series of independent actions without coherence. The defenders were well organized and well led. Animated by religious ardour they fought with fury and confidence. Women fought side by side with the men. Traitors received summary justice. Reinforcements came

¹ Montauban itself had five ministers. The remaining eight had been driven into the city from the neighbouring towns.

² The early letters of the king and of Luynes and of the army leaders show that they expected the campaign and the siege of Montauban to be little more than a parade. Schomberg declared that "he was willing to let the king take off his head if they should fail".

to the royal army from Toulouse but these did not compensate for the ravages wrought by pestilence and war waste. The numbers of the besieged were reinforced on September 27 by some seven hundred men whom Rohan in the face of the greatest difficulties had succeeded in throwing into the city by the St. Antoine gate. "In everything", wrote Louis, "the blessing of God seems upon me."

To Louis on October 18 came a delegation from the Assembly of the Clergy then in session at Bordeaux and harangued him pompously in the plain before Montauban as if that city were already in his power. They lauded him for his piety, reproached him for his mercy, and exulted in the triumphs of his armies, affecting to have been haunted hitherto by the dread of Huguenot domination. The king had been too lenient with the heretic. He had been too long merciful. His indulgence had been abused. The Huguenots had dealt cruelly with the Catholics. Most horrible sacrileges had been committed. They had conspired against the state. "Grace had become the foster-mother of crime." The clergy demanded remedies to fit the case.

Extreme ills call for extreme remedies. What better could you do, Sire, than take the rod of iron in hand to chastise these criminals guilty of *lèse-majesté* human and divine. We do not ask war. On the contrary we desire peace. It remains only to complete the victories that the God of battles has so miraculously put in your hands. When peace comes it must be a final peace. Peace should mean the end of protestantism, unity of faith. Any edict that divides faith, divides kingdoms. Peace that left the Church desecrated would be peace only in name, an ill, daubed to resemble a good.

The edicts of pacification have been failures. They have but made the Protestants more stubborn. They are signs only of their faithlessness and the king's weakness.

We do not aim to uproot error by force, knowing that liberty is graven by nature in the spirit of man, that what is introduced into it by force is of short duration, especially in a matter of faith which should be free and should insinuate itself gently by inspiration, by patience, by remonstrance and by every kind of good example. It is by this gentle constraint that we hope to see heresy driven from the confines of your realm. Such are our aims. But we supplicate your Majesty to demolish these surety-towns, which these rebels hold not by an edict but by a simple patent. They have made themselves unworthy to hold them. They have used them to foster open faction and to practice upon the clergy and Catholics every sort of severity as if heaven had given the latter birth in those places only to be their victims. After God has restored these places to your hands we pray you to see that the Catholics are made the stronger in them, from whom the Protestants are to expect every favourable treatment. To this end, Sire, the deputies of the Clergy of France have commissioned us to present to your Majesty one million in gold which we dedicate to the achievement of this master-stroke and especially to the siege of La Rochelle, in order that as it has been the front of the rebellion, it may also be the end of it.

Do not doubt, Sire, that if you make here such vows, such a promise to God, He will confer upon you equal honour to that which of old he conferred upon Philip Augustus and the father of Saint Louis, your predecessor, Sire, who in these very regions obtained such signal victories over the Albigensians, ruining them completely, themselves, their heresies, and their cities. For, those of our day having builded upon these ruins in their new opinions and refusing likewise that obedience to the grandson of Saint Louis which their predecessors refused to his father, we assure you that upon a similar sin will be visited a like chastisement and that the same Divine Majesty will be propitious and will help you to get the better, not only of this *mont sourcilleux* (Montauban) whose resistance can only draw down upon itself the greater ruin and a

fuller glory for yourself, but as well of all these rebellious cities, above all of La Rochelle, the centre from which all lines of rebellion radiate to the circumference, a city which has increased only by the misfortunes of others.

But this orator was not a Joshua and the walls of Montauban did not crumble before the blowing of his trumpet. Nor did the wonder-worker Father Dominic have a greater effect although he was brought down for the express purpose of enheartening the royal army by his benedictions. The siege had dragged itself out beyond all expectation. Partial successes in the field over small companies of Rohan's troops as he attempted to throw reinforcements into the city, could not relieve the growing discouragement of the besiegers as after three months' investment no sign was visible of abatement in the spirit and skill of the defenders of the city. Luynes had made no adequate provision for such a campaign. The winter was upon them and the camp was uninhabitable. The gallantry of the king's officers had brought its inevitable penalty. Many of the best of them were dead. The death of the duc de Mayenne filled the troops with despair.¹ Disease infested the camp, and there were no hospitals. The sick were carried to Toulouse and spread pestilence there of which ten thousand citizens are said to have died. At last on November 10 the king and his suite started for Toulouse. The greater part of the army followed him two days later and the siege was raised on the eighteenth. The king wrote to the

¹ So great was his popularity that the people of Paris vented their rage by attacks on the Protestants of that city and by the burning of their temple at Charenton.

duc de Nevers that "he was leaving troops in the neighbourhood of the city to harrass it so that the citizens might be brought to a sense of their duty and be forced to acknowledge their error". He himself is about to take a trip through Languedoc that "will be so advantageous to the state as to remain forever memorable". He returned to Paris in January 1622 and empowered Lesdiguières to negotiate peace with Rohan.

Encouraged by the check the king had received before Montauban several places that had opened their gates to receive Louis on his advance raised again the standard of revolt and in the wake of his retreat the strife continued more bitterly than before. This was due partly to his having stationed garrisons in the small towns about Montauban for the purpose of overawing the city. So Montheurt rebelled. Luynes attacked it and died two days before it succumbed. Nègrepelisse, Clairac and Tonneins fell into Protestant hands again while in Poitou, Soubise recaptured almost all that he had lost.

In spite of this renaissance of Huguenot hopes all the energy and resourcefulness of Rohan was required to save the *Cause*.¹ From now on he is

¹ As to the churches their state is deplorable. Scarcely would one have believed that ten years could have created as much misfortune as has happened in eight months. After having lost Sancerre, Jargeau, Saumur, Saintonge, Poitou, we are now losing Guyenne. M. du Mayenne has taken Nérac, and put a papist garrison in the castle; M. du Boisse has gone over to our enemies; in short everything is giving way. Only Languedoc is left and there we are preparing to make what little resistance is possible. Montauban is about to be besieged. What the consequences will

the head and soul of the rebellion. He was perfectly conscious of the slightness of Huguenot resources and the odds to be faced. He knew the forlornness of his hope as well as Sully and others who took pains to point it out to him. So it was not with any lightness of heart that he continued this hazardous enterprise. Nor was it with any selfish aim, as the next few months were to demonstrate conclusively. Resistance seemed to him the only road to peace. He had been trained in the school of Henry IV and he continued the traditions of that school. His argument was the old argument. Protestants possessed certain rights under the Edict of which they were being robbed. But the Edict had put into their hands the means of self-defence and it would be treachery to their rights and their people not to employ every resource at their disposal for the defence of those rights. If they lost the right of defending themselves by arms, everything was lost.

Rohan had advocated peace from the first and negotiations for peace continued practically without interruption from the outbreak of hostilities to their close. Thus the war was an adjunct to peace negotiations and for the sake of a durable peace Rohan kept the sword unsheathed working the horrors that accompany civil war.

be and what edicts will follow you may easily imagine. La Rochelle holds out still, but d'Epernon has troops about it and has closed up the approaches. Our neighbours watch us with arms crossed. God alone can help us, and it seems that He has turned His face entirely away from us and changed His favor to indignation. Du Moulin to Rivet, July 21, 1621. B.S.H.P., 10: 354.

But he and the war party in the Assembly were mistaken. The reign of Henry IV had restored the nation's confidence in its old ideals. France was slowly regretting the Edict of Nantes. Under Louis XIV legal chicanery would quibble protestantism out of existence. For the moment it was the feudal idea perpetuated in the Edict that was repugnant to the national sense. On the other hand the beneficiaries of the Edict courted their own destruction by a resistance prolonged for ten years which awakened no unanimous response in the hearts of their people. They could not realize the changing conditions of life nor understand that the vitality of religion does not reside in its temporal power.

Rohan was the only great Protestant noble whose devotion to the *Cause* was single-minded. Du Plessis-Mornay was out of favour and on the point of death as well. Lesdiguières was in command of one of the royal armies operating in the south and was soon to be made Constable. As leader of the Protestant forces of Burgundy, Dauphiny and Provence he was replaced by Du Puy-Montbrun whom he quickly subdued. Bouillon in his border principality of Sedan was immersed in the struggle between the German Protestants and the Empire. Châtillon had already been made a marshal. La Force was about to follow suit.¹ Lesdiguières and Bouillon had both declined the post of generalissimo under the Assembly. Rohan by his zeal and devotion as well as by his talents was plainly designated for that post.

¹ He received the marshal's baton May 27, 1622.

Already when Châtillon's command was turned over to him Rohan had become general-in-chief of the entire south and virtually Commander-in-Chief under the Assembly since the land campaign was confined practically to the southern area. Soon however the Assembly created him General of the Reformed Churches of France. Then the great qualities of the man appeared in high relief. His devotion, his inspiring eloquence, his quickness of decision, his untiring activity, his self-control made him the most popular of chiefs and the most formidable of opponents. In this campaign he had not only to face an enemy that was overwhelmingly superior in numbers and trying to surround him, he had to fight faction in his own party. He had to soothe jealousies; he had to infuse courage into the half-hearted; he had to thwart the treachery of those whose only pre-occupation was self-advancement; he had to impose his authority on the refractory. He aroused the antagonism of the nobles and the wealthy classes, but protestantism was depending more and more upon the simple folk. To them he knew how to appeal both by self-abasement and self-assertion.

Rohan's energies were taxed to the utmost. His difficulties seemed insuperable. The provinces of the south-east resented his domination and opened up negotiations again with Châtillon and Lesdiguières. He overcame their hostility. His subordinates were always calling for more men and many of them were coquetting with the enemy. He was the greatest of recruiting officers but although he devoted his own fortune to the cause

his troops remained so ill-paid that at seed-time and harvest it was necessary to disband them. He prepared to maintain himself against the royal armies. His lieutenant in Montauban held his own against the royal commanders Vendôme and Thémînes. He himself directed the resistance in Lower Languedoc where Lesdiguières was trying to gain control of the passages of the Rhône and Montmorency, burning and pillaging, was concentrating his forces upon Montpellier. Guise was advancing from Provence and Châtillon occupied Aigues-Mortes. Unfortunately Rohan lent himself to the fanatical methods of the most fanatical among his followers.

The affairs of protestantism in the south were directed by a Cercle now meeting in Nîmes, representing Dauphiny, Cévennes, Vivarais, and Upper and Lower Languedoc. It was this body that had deposed Châtillon in October (20). A few days later it transferred its sittings to Montpellier and vowed to wage war to the bitter end. It found great difficulty in recruiting its forces because many Protestants would not at all believe that it was the king's purpose to destroy the Edict of Nantes but only to put an end to local disturbances with which the south was filled. On November 20 this Cercle had passed an ordinance¹ prohibiting Catholic

¹"The Assembly observes that whereas the kind treatment received by the papists in our cities ought to have served as a restraint to those in authority in the cities where they are the masters and to have prevented them from molesting our brethren in the exercise of their religion and from doing them any injury whatever, this consideration on the contrary has made them more insolent so that in a number of places in our jurisdiction the practise of our religion,

worship throughout its resort and ordering that Catholics in Montpellier be held as hostages for the safety of Protestants in "papist towns".

On December 15 it published a second decree confirming the first as follows:

Considering that the open persecution lately begun against the reformed churches of this kingdom increases in severity daily and that our enemies show themselves more bitterly determined than ever upon our ruin, there is need in order to defeat their efforts and to show the justice and legitimacy of our defence, to fortify the cities and places that we hold and which serve as a refuge and a retreat to those of our religion for the preservation of their possessions, and to provide against any contingencies that might in any way prejudice the safety of these places and make them serviceable as fortresses to our enemies, the Assembly, desiring to provide by all means possible for the surety of these places and to forestall the evil designs of the enemy orders that prompt measures be taken for the demolition of all churches, convents, belfries, and other buildings ecclesiastic and others, whether in the city or the country which might be used by our enemies as shelters, fortresses or garrisons and do injury to the surety of the places and cities that serve as a defence to those of the religion,

and it instructed all governments, councils and communities to set about the execution of this order forthwith.

has been prohibited as at Montagnac, Florensac, Vindémian and elsewhere and in addition our temples have been burned or demolished—and this ought to disabuse certain of our faith of the belief they have held hitherto that this war is not an open persecution of our religion, a view which has led and still leads them daily to take up arms against us . . . for these causes we order . . . that the performance of mass be prohibited in all the cities of our Department, particularly in Montpellier and to this end ecclesiastics on being notified for the first time will cease all papistical practices and the papists of Montpellier will be held in the city as prisoners to await treatment similar to that which is meted out to our people in papist towns." La Garde, p. 9.

Under these warrants, confirmed by Rohan, after periods of fasting and prayer, the Protestants proceeded to most wanton acts of destruction for which it would be hard to find justification. Any ecclesiastical building that could serve as a fortress was destroyed. Bells were removed to be turned into Protestant artillery. On the plea of military necessity monasteries, palaces, presbyteries were burned. Catholics were called upon to abjure or were held as hostages or ordered to leave the towns. Corpses were exhumed and bones dispersed. In vain the governors of certain cities tried to defer action and to restrain the violence of the mob. Pastors, Cercles, Assemblies urged on the people and the orders of the Cercle were executed sooner or later in many towns and cities of Languedoc. They often became orgies of pillage, fire and destruction.

The pacifists of the party had never ceased their efforts to produce harmony between the Assembly and the king. In the spring and summer of 1621 La Trémouille with the encouragement of Lesdiguières had repeatedly impressed upon the Assembly the desirability of placating the king by submission and separation. Rohan had urged the same course in July of that year after Luynes had made overtures to him in vain, hoping to detach him from his party and had offered to restore all Protestant surety-towns if the Assembly made submission. In August during the siege of Montauban Sully had made himself the intermediary. But nothing came of all their efforts. The Assembly which kept in close touch with the government of

the city and came more and more under its power as its financial needs became greater and more pressing communicated these proceedings to the city council which advised "careful consideration". It then wrote to the king asking for passports for its deputies. But Lesdiguières recommended immediate separation and promised that safe conduct would be given to the deputies-general. The Assembly wished to consult the churches as well as its agents in Holland and England but offered to dissolve if the king would give sureties to its deputies and to those of the churches. But Rohan had decided for war and the people of La Rochelle in spite of the municipal government requested the Assembly to support Rohan. The same suggestion was repeated in November during the siege of Montauban. Sully who had disavowed the Assembly according to the decree of May 27 hoped through his son d'Orval to bring to an end the resistance of Montauban. But the first consul Du Puy declared "that Montauban was resolved to live and die in the union of the churches and would not discuss peace without the authority of the Assembly and of Rohan". Luynes then approached Rohan himself in an effort to detach him from the common cause. "With regard to Castres and other places in your district ask what you will", said Luynes, "you will obtain it; for your private interests *carte blanche* is offered you." But Rohan spurned his advances. "I am fully resolved to suffer if need be for I have made a solemn promise to consider nothing but a general peace."

After the king's return to Paris Lesdiguières opened negotiations with Rohan. Exchanges of view began in January while Rohan was in Montpellier and were carried on into March. Some of the more fanatical of the Protestants were furious at Rohan for cherishing any idea of peace and murdered the Protestant envoys of "this fine Lesdiguières who is not to be thanked if protestantism is not overturned in France".¹ This was but one phase of the quarrel between Rohan and the Cercle of Montpellier. The latter accused him of arbitrariness and carried their complaints to the Assembly. The Assembly justified Rohan. Negotiations between Rohan and Lesdiguières came to an end in March when a truce was arranged. The truce was doubly welcome to Rohan since it enabled him to concentrate his military strength against Montmorency while at the same time carrying on negotiations for peace with Lesdiguières.

Rohan and Lesdiguières met at Laval (April 3) and drew up articles of peace acceptable to both. On April 4 the deputies started for Paris and Rohan and Lesdiguières invited the Protestant chiefs and the Assembly to send their deputies as well. The terms arranged were ratified by the Assembly of Nîmes and Alais (May 25): namely that (1) the rising of the Protestants should be pardoned; (2) the Edict of Nantes should be established in its integrity; (3) all surety-towns conquered by the king during the past year should be restored and the term of tenure extended for four years;

¹ Rohan hunted out and punished eight of them—hanged two, broke two on the wheel, whipped two and sent two to the galleys.

(4) the royal grant for the support of ministers and garrisons should be paid in full; (5) the Protestants should retain the privilege of holding a Political Assembly under the good pleasure of the king; (6) the nobles should receive indemnities for losses during the present war.

The Protestant envoys did not find Louis at Paris. There he had spent an idle winter caught between two parties and unable to decide either for peace or for war. Richelieu and the Queen-Mother supported by Jeannin¹ were frankly for peace and tried to detain the king in Paris until the arrival of the deputies from Rohan. Condé was just as frankly for the immediate renewal of war upon his former allies. Louis leaned first to the one side and then to the other. While he was in the way of peace he had instructed Lesdiguières to open negotiations with Rohan. Then he accepted the advice of Condé and left Paris quietly (March 21) "rather in the guise of a hunter", says Richelieu, "than a conqueror and as yet undecided as to the direction he was to take, whether towards Poitou or towards Languedoc".²

Rohan's deputies found Louis however at Niort (April 25) flushed with his victory over Soubise and consequently more severe in his attitude. He sent them to the Queen-Mother at Nantes who referred them to the chancellor, Pontchartrain, at Paris. They returned to the south having accomplished nothing.

¹ President of the Parlement of Dijon.

² Richelieu, *Mémoires*, 1: 262-3.

In its turn the Assembly was also seeking peace. James I of England to whom it had appealed for aid was indisposed to give active assistance to subjects in rebellion against their lawful monarch. He deemed it sufficient to send Lord Duncaster to France as an angel of peace. Duncaster had been a witness of the futile negotiations of 1621 and now (January 1622) he informed the Assembly that their first duty was to approach the king with a request for pardon. The Assembly then while urging the churches and the Cercle of Montpellier not to relax their military activities in any way sent a letter of submission to Louis (January 10). Immediately afterwards it yielded to the request of Rohan and empowered him to continue the negotiations that had been begun with Luynes, but to conclude nothing without consulting the Assembly.

While the king had halted at Castelnaudry (July 5-13) on his triumphal march through Languedoc, he received new deputies from Rohan, but terms of peace could not be agreed upon. At the end of July after Blacons had actually sold to Lesdiguières for twenty thousand crowns Pouzin the key to the passage of the Rhône and had thus made the position of Rohan hopeless, Bouillon intervened offering to create a diversion on the eastern border with the help of Count Mansfeld. When news of this plan reached the Assembly it immediately heralded Mansfeld as their deliverer. But Bouillon's plans came to nothing. Mansfeld fell upon Lorraine and was bought off by Louis.

At the end of August, as the king approached

Montpellier, Lesdiguières and Rohan agreed on all points except the king's entry into the city. Condé's oath that he would sack the city enraged the Protestants and in spite of Rohan's advice they resolved to resist. To Rohan's deputies asking the king while at Béziers not to insist upon this condition, Louis replied: "Return to Montpellier and tell the people of that city that I impose conditions on my subjects and receive none from them. Let them accept the terms that I have offered or else let them prepare to be forced into accepting them". Rohan took the sting out of this answer by a *sursum corda* and a promise of help. The Cercle met and swore a new oath of union, determined to hold out to the bitter end.

Now Louis had repeated his triumphs of the preceding autumn. He surprised Soubise who was occupying the island of Ré and put him to ignominious flight. Leaving the Comte de Soissons to blockade La Rochelle he followed the line of his previous campaign and marched along the course of the Gironde through Saintonge and Guyenne in the direction of Montauban. He took Royan (May 11). La Force gave up St. Foy and Montflanquin (May 24). Soulac and Clairac threw open their gates and Sully allowed his possessions in Quercy to be occupied.

The Assembly whose attention was taken up with internal troubles had bestowed little thought on Louis' campaign. Consternation reigned when it learned what had happened in Guyenne. It made preparations for the defence of Montauban. But Louis, having captured Nègrepelisse which

he gave over to fire and sword, and St. Antonin, pushed past Montauban and through southern Languedoc in the direction of Montpellier. Massacre, pillage and systematic devastation marked the progress of his army as of all armies in this age. He received royal welcome at Carcassonne, Narbonne and Béziers and appeared before Montpellier September 1. He had had this city in mind as an objective for many months.¹ There for three months under orders from Louis, Montmorency had been devastating the country-side so as to cut off the city from the outer world. Louis completed its isolation by the capture of Mauguio, Lunel, and Sommières.

While Louis advanced towards Montpellier, La Rochelle was defending itself against Soissons. Soissons constructed a fort at the mouth of the Blavet but his operations were so slow and his success so doubtful that the duc de Guise was ordered to blockade the city from the sea. With 40 ships carrying 600 guns and 14,000 men he sailed to La Rochelle.

The Assembly had not overlooked the danger that this great ocean port might encounter from an attack by sea and had organized its naval force as well as its military power at the very beginning of hostilities. Favas was named admiral of the fleet and a flotilla of small boats had been sent to the Gulf of Lyons which defied four royal frigates and ravaged the coasts of

¹ Louis wrote from Casteljaloux December 16, 1621, that he hoped soon to relieve the Catholic inhabitants of Montpellier. De Vic, 11: 957.

Languedoc. By this time however Favas had been deprived of all his offices and excommunicated. Therefore Jean Guiton was asked to get together all available vessels for the defence of the city. This peaceful merchant of La Rochelle, brought into prominence by the sea operations of the Assembly, became in the course of the next few years one of the most striking figures in the history of French protestantism. On October 16 (1620) he was named admiral of a fleet of 16 small vessels with 90 cannon. A year later to meet the attack of Guise he had 39 ships and 500 cannon.

During March and April, Rohan with about five thousand men had been campaigning in Lower Languedoc to checkmate the operations of a slightly larger force under Montmorency. The country-side was ravaged in real feudal fashion by the passing and re-passing of these hostile forces. Towns and hamlets and châteaux changed hands again and again to be left finally in partial or total ruin. In May at the request of Montpellier and Uzès, Rohan wasted the country-side in the neighbourhood of both cities so as to embarrass Montmorency in his movements. At Nîmes he repressed a movement aimed against himself and then disbanded his troops, who had been long without pay, while he went to Montauban to aid Malauze, the commander there. In Rohan's absence Montmorency fell once more upon the Montpellier area spreading desolation still more widely in preparation for the siege by Louis. In June Rohan left Montauban and was straining every nerve to relieve the towns threat-

ened by the king. By the middle of July he was back in Montpellier imposing order upon various factions and fortifying the weak defences of the city against the threatened siege. After spending a fortnight there in this way he departed and betook himself to his great recruiting grounds the Cévennes Mountains.

The siege of Montpellier was a repetition of that of Montauban. The besiegers numbered about twenty-three thousand. Fresh artillery had been brought down the Rhône, free now for the transport of men and material by the submission of Blacons. The city was defended by fifteen hundred men and the organized citizens fighting not only for the city and their homes but for religion. The heroism of the defence equalled that of Montauban. Great issues were at stake on either side. To the Protestants Montpellier was the last great outpost. If it fell the cause would fall with it. If it held out the rights of protestantism could not be flouted. For the king a second failure meant a mockery of his authority. The city prepared for a death struggle. A company of women was formed that fought side by side with the men. Two gibbets were erected for the punishment of traitors. Each bore the inscription "here will be hanged the bearers of evil tidings and the *escambarlats*". Rohan following his habitual tactics remained outside the city hovering about the king's rear but not daring to attack as the four thousand men with him had been recruited on the distinct understanding that they were for show and not for action.

The siege lasted six weeks. The royal army

was commanded by Condé. Louis watched the movements of his troops from a tower erected for the purpose. At first hope ran high but the siege was so badly conducted and the losses of the king so great by pestilence and hunger as well as by action that Louis "was on the point of giving up the murderous undertaking when Lesdiguières succeeded in concluding peace". The defence was conducted by the marquis de Callonge to whom Rohan had transferred the governorship. It was splendidly organized. Under a Council of Direction the city became self-sufficient. Wealthy citizens financed the corporation. D'Argencourt, a well-known engineer had charge of the fortifications; Améric, the first consul organized the commissariat and medical services; Dupuy of Montauban fame assisted; all of them were ardent admirers of Rohan who remained as it were a great King Arthur figure inspiring and advising.

The fact is both besiegers and besieged were anxious for peace, Rohan no less than the king. Rohan asked of (September 1) and received from (September 26) the Assembly of La Rochelle full power to conclude peace. On the eighteenth peace was signed.

On Tuesday evening Rohan came and found the king almost entirely alone and he kneeled before his Majesty and asked for pardon for having borne arms against him and the next day he entered the city and the deputies of various cities came and asked pardon and peace. First Callonge and then the Cévennes deputies, afterwards those of Uzès and of Nîmes and at last those of Montpellier. The next day the garrison left to the number of twelve hundred men in good order and the king entered with all the court, the people crying on every hand "Long live the king! Mercy! Mercy!"

The besiegers and besieged mingled in the streets and the city fired salvos.

When news of peace arrived at La Rochelle a terrific engagement was in progress between the fleets of Guise and Guiton. Guise had fallen first upon the island of Ré. Then he had sailed into the harbour and attacked Guiton. Nightfall separated the combatants. The battle was renewed on several succeeding days. The arrival of the messengers of peace probably saved the fleet of La Rochelle from annihilation, it being much inferior in weight, guns and personnel. It had lost 1,500 men. It received the unstinted praise of the royal commander.

Peace was proclaimed in the form of a royal declaration on the twentieth. The king stated that he had used all honourable means to keep the peace and that he had always desired to maintain the Edict in favour of the Protestants but that the actions of certain misguided persons had made it necessary to employ force. The terms of the peace were moderated so as to impress the Protestants with his desire to protect and favour them. The declaration confirmed the Edict of Nantes in its private as well as in its public clauses. It restored both religions to those places in which they had been interrupted. It reestablished the courts of justice except for the *chambre mi-partie* of Guyenne which was to be removed from Nérac. It ordered the destruction of any new fortifications and forbade the building of others. A garrison was left in Fort Louis to remind La Rochelle of its duty. It proscribed all assemblies of a political character

except under the express permission of the king. It issued a general pardon and restored Protestants to all their former offices and dignities. It promised commissioners who should see to the just execution of the treaty.

As usual private stipulations were made which caused endless confusion later. They were embodied in letters-patent. One of these patents (October 18) provided that neither governor nor garrison nor citadel should be imposed upon the city and that the municipal government should be left as usual in the hands of consuls elected by the citizens. No change was to be made except in regard to the destruction of fortifications. A second (October 24) ordered that two-thirds of the fortifications of Montauban, Nîmes, Uzès, Castres, Milhau and La Rochelle should be rased. A third (October 25) modified the second requiring the destruction of only one-half of the fortifications. A fourth (October 31) authorized the nomination of deputies-general. Indemnities were provided for Rohan, Soubise and Callonge. Rohan was made governor of Nîmes, Uzès and Castres.

A month later the Assembly received letters from Rohan with details of this peace. He forwarded also nominations for candidates to the deputy-generalship, "which letters having been received, the company in one voice praised God for having inspired the heart of the king to give peace to his state and surety for life and liberty of conscience to those of the religion". It approved also Rohan's suggestions of names for the deputies-general. Representatives of the Assembly were

named on request from the Council of La Rochelle to receive the king's heralds of peace on the afternoon of the same day. The Assembly's accounts were certified, instructions were drawn up for the new deputies, the minutes were deposited in municipal vaults, and the Assembly dissolved on November 13.

The war was over. The Assembly had been in session for twenty-two months and eighteen days. It had opened an enthusiastic, numerous, and united party. It closed, torn by divisions, and enfeebled by defection. The haughty defiance of its beginnings was reduced to the humble acceptance of peace in the arrangements in which it had no part. Abandoned by the nobles of the party it had arrogantly declared its ability to dispense with their assistance.¹ Confronted by defection everywhere it lost prestige among its own people, faced the loss of upwards of eighty surety-towns without any power to make a protest, and signed a peace in the arrangements for which it had no voice. It was the last great general political assembly of the Huguenots.

¹ "Very well! If you abandon us, we shall get along without you. We shall find others who will be more zealous in the defense of our religion."

CHAPTER XI

THE SECOND HUGUENOT RISING

Louis remained in the south until the new year and kept closely in touch with those who were especially charged with the execution of the terms of the peace of Montpellier. It is plain that his presence contributed to more rigorous rather than more lenient treatment of offending persons and communities. The bitterness that existed towards the Huguenots on the part of the Catholics and had been shown by the various parlements during the war was continued after the peace. They were treated as rebels who had no claim to favourable consideration.

The spirit in which the treaty was executed is well seen in the perfidious instructions to the royal commissioners appointed to carry out its terms. These instructions ordered that since only two-thirds of the fortifications of Nîmes and Uzès were to be destroyed the commissioners were to insist that this be carried out in the parts that were strongest. As for Montpellier, Privas and the other places of Vivarais and the Cévennes they should see to it that the entire fortifications were raised, notwithstanding the special patents granted to satisfy the people of Montpellier, Nîmes and Uzès according to which he reduced to two-thirds the extent of the fortifications to be destroyed in the first case and to one-half in the other two cases.

The commissioners were directed to destroy two-thirds of the strongest sections of the fortifications of Castres in spite of the patent which stipulated one-half only and in the event of pressure being brought to bear to make them conform to the letter of the patent the commissioners were to inform the duc de Rohan that the intention of the king was that two-thirds should be destroyed and that the patent was granted at Rohan's request only as a pretext for obtaining the consent of the people to the peace. It will be seen that here is shown the greatest disregard on the part of the Crown for a solemn compact.

In each of the provinces special agents were appointed to carry out the military provisions of the peace. These agents were to act in a general way in conjunction with Rohan as protector of Huguenot interests. Such a display of confidence in Rohan appears to have been conceived rather for the purpose of gaining his good-will than as a thoroughly frank intention to insure a fair execution of the treaty. Undoubtedly his appointment helped to reassure the Huguenots but his advice was seldom accepted when in conflict with that of the military agents and his reputation with his people suffered by his inability to have his way.

The Huguenot cities hastened to make their submission in compliance with the terms of the treaty which allowed them a fortnight for this purpose. The demolition of fortifications began all through the south. But friction arose at once in various places chiefly in Montpellier and La Rochelle.

The people of Montpellier fearing a repetition of the terrible scenes that had taken place at Nègrepelisse and elsewhere had refused at first to consider the king's proposals of peace because he insisted on coming into the city. When at last they conceded this point it was on the express understanding incorporated in the treaty that there should be neither governor nor garrison left in the city nor a citadel erected there. When Louis quitted the city on October 27, he left behind him upwards of 4,000 men under the command of a *mestre de camp*, Jacques d'Etampes, Seigneur de Valençay. Valençay was something more than a colonel of dragoons, or even a military governor. He was brother-in-law of Puisieux, Secretary of State, and although he believed in rattling the sabre he knew something of intrigue and diplomacy. Rigid, suspicious and unfeeling, he exasperated the Protestants by his petty and mechanical methods. Valençay declared that he would "exterminate protestantism in two years without drawing the sword" and it was in this spirit that he began his work of pacification. He had determined to make the garrison permanent and actually succeeded in inducing the city to accept a garrison instead of meeting the excessive demand for hostages required by the treaty as a guarantee of the destruction of the fortifications. When in due time after the installation of the garrison complaints arose of the inconvenience and evils that followed the quartering of the soldiers on the citizens, Valençay again tricked them into sanctioning the construction of a citadel in which to house the troops.

Thus to be rid of one temporary evil imposed by the edict the Protestants of Montpellier had accepted two that were in direct contravention of the treaty and might easily become permanent. In this occurrence they showed as a mass their general indifference to the whole situation. The affairs of a free city with a theoretically democratic government could be manipulated in the sixteenth century as well as in the thirteenth or twentieth, whether the "boss" was Valençay or Rohan.

At last by the intervention of Rohan, Valençay was forced to withdraw the garrison. Instead of disbanding the troops he led them into the Cévennes Mountains and attempted to lodge them there, with the evident purpose of overawing those hardy mountaineers who had formed the back-bone of the Huguenot armies. He gained admission to two of their towns, Sauve and Ganges, in spite of Rohan's warnings to the inhabitants to resist him by force. But there his enterprise came to an end for Valençay hesitated to take the most violent means for the execution of his plans, because of the warnings of the royal commissioners who had already begun their work.

Valençay returned to Montpellier at the moment of the regular annual municipal elections. He found that a meeting had been held and six Protestants named as consuls. This proceeding was a perfectly legitimate one since the treaty stipulated that there was to be no change in the government of the city. The consuls had been Protestant ever since Montpellier had accepted Protestant doc-

trines although there was a certain Catholic minority that had a real right to representation. Valençay quashed the election and ordered a new one.

Rohan having been apprised of trouble arrived in Montpellier at this very moment. Valençay, who had warned Rohan against coming, refused to allow the consuls to welcome him. He himself however met Rohan and lodged him in the governor's house which he surrounded with guards that night. Rohan safely out of the way, Valençay packed a town meeting, alleging the authority of the king, and ordered a new election of consuls, three Catholic and three Protestant. The consulate of Montpellier thus became *mi-parti*. In a similar fashion or even more violently other towns in the south were forced to change the character of their consulate.

Rohan was released by Louis with orders to leave Lower Languedoc, proceed to Upper Languedoc forthwith and to use his good offices especially in Castres and Milhau to procure the peaceable execution of the treaty. Rohan refused to go until the troops left in the Cévennes and Lower Languedoc were disbanded.

Another cause of friction was a fort, the notorious Fort Louis, begun by the Comte de Soissons whom Louis had charged with the blockade of La Rochelle while he led the campaign in the south. Only partially complete on the conclusion of peace Soissons left in it a garrison which in spite of open orders from the king continued the work of construction. Rohan says that Louis issued secret

orders for the completion of the fort. On the seaward side of La Rochelle, half a mile from the city, on an eminence commanding both city and harbour, it was a constant menace and the soldiers of the garrison an ever present nuisance. Successive commandants refused to interrupt the work of construction alleging that it was only a barracks and training ground. The annoyance of the people of La Rochelle was great, the collision between citizens and soldiers frequent and remonstrances persistent. But the completion of the fort and the decision of Louis not to discuss either it or the garrison played a very great part in the creation of new commotions. Louis plainly preferred a citadel and a garrison to the precarious good-will of what he thought was a handful of Huguenot malcontents.

Even these injustices might have been overlooked by the Protestants if "their mistrust had not been aggravated by the petty persecutions they were made to endure every day".

In March 1623, months before the completion of Fort Louis or the citadel at Montpellier, the deputies-general, supported by other deputies from the provinces, had presented a list of grievances to the king. Relief was asked in regard to these difficulties at Montpellier and La Rochelle and at many other places. They asked as well that arrears of subsidies be paid, that the temples destroyed by the Catholic populace during the war or since the peace, at Charenton, Tours, Romorantin and Jargeau, be re-built for them and that their right

of worship be restored in various towns where the greatest resistance was being made to their legitimate claims.¹ Relief was asked also from taxation imposed upon them contrary to the Edict. In addition they demanded that justice be put within the reach of the people of Languedoc by the restoration of the *chambre de l'édit* to Castres; that the edict concerning Protestants in Béarn be carried into full effect; that Huguenot prisoners be released from the galleys and that commissioners be appointed for the carrying out of peace "who had the sympathy that was necessary for the achievement of peace".

The replies of the king to these complaints seemed on the whole favourable. He refused as yet to withdraw the garrison and disband the troops in question. "He committed to the care and diligence of the commissioners the reconstruction of the temples" destroyed by the fanaticism of the mob. In the other cases he referred the petitioners to the commission already sent out.

The commissioners usually chosen were men of moderate opinions eager to settle these difficult questions by compromise. Their work was not at all acceptable to the reformers because in nearly every case a compromise tended naturally to favour the long established religion. The Protestant commissioner, who was chosen by his Catholic colleague, sought to avoid friction by yielding to the opinion of the commissioner representing the majority. In nearly every case where there was a dispute

¹ Bagnols, Figeac, Luçon, Puymirols, Quillebeouf, Saint-Gilles, Talmont, Vic.

about place or right of worship an effort was made to placate Catholic opinion. Thus the Protestant commissioner incurred the censure of the zealots and left open sores behind him, and the Huguenot came to feel that after all he was merely tolerated and that his rights were illusory. His feeling was well founded for within the next half-century the judgments of all these commissioners and courts were used as a basis for the creation of a jurisprudence which led legally to the revocation of the Edict of Nantes.¹ "In this way the Catholics gained as many advantages by the peace as they could have expected from a successful war. For, while the promises made before Montpellier were eluded by a thousand and one artifices, everywhere the Catholics were granted everything to which they could lay any claim."² Again in September the deputies-general renewed their remonstrances concerning Fort Louis and the garrison in Montpellier.

Another restriction imposed upon the Protestants at this time, the more irksome because of the many other humiliations they were undergoing, was the order that³ "one of our officers of the so-called reformed religion" should sit in future as a royal commissioner at all Huguenot assemblies. The king was determined to destroy the political activities of the Huguenots and to prevent them from

¹ See the works of Meynier, Bernard, Soulier, Filleau and others.

² Benoit, 2: 436.

³ Declaration of April 17, 1623.

discussing political affairs in their assemblies as they had done in the past, out of which had grown a number of decisions in opposition to the sentiments and intentions of the mass as well as of the most considerable among our subjects of the so-called reformed religion and to the public peace . . . and in case anything is submitted for consideration except what concerns merely the conduct and discipline of the said so-called reformed religion, the commissioner is to oppose it and prevent it by making such remonstrances as he judges necessary in the circumstances and he will make a faithful report to us concerning the same.

The first synod to be held under the eyes of the king's commissioner was the twenty-fourth National Synod which met at Charenton in September.¹ The presence of the commissioner raised a "great debate". The synod felt that it lay under unjust suspicions.

Moreover by this action the benefits of the Edict are greatly diminished and all the privileges granted us are almost entirely revoked. And the synod is resolved to present to his Majesty a petition praying him to maintain the churches in the former liberty which had been granted them and which they had enjoyed till now. These protests and others were to no purpose.

The report of the deputation that had waited upon the king with the synod's remonstrances shows one of the causes of much of the disintegration that was taking place in protestantism at this moment. The committee was greatly impressed by the personal graciousness of the monarch. The suavity of the Court and the condescension of the great officers pleased and softened them. The requests and admonitions of the king and chancellor flattered rather than agitated them. Their attitude is no longer that of a deputation to Henry IV. Him they had approached familiarly as a friend and

¹ Aymon, 2: 236 ff.

protector, even as an advocate. They were ushered into the presence of Louis XIII with all the dignity and formality attendant upon a Court, as became subjects presenting humble submission to their sovereign. They basked in his favour but were separated from him by all the glory of majesty.

They were first presented to the chancellor and secretaries of state

who received them very favourably and assured them that it was the intention of the king to preserve peace in his realm, and especially to maintain his subjects of the reformed religion provided that they on their part persisted in their duty and obedience. And they beseeched the pastors and elders of this synod that when they returned to their provinces they would exhort the people to respond to his Majesty's expectations of them as they had promised.

Then they were ushered into the presence of the king himself surrounded by his lords of the Privy Council.

They assured his Majesty in the name of this synod and of all the reformed churches of the kingdom of their loyal submission and obedience and thanked him for the peace he had been pleased to grant them and prayed his Majesty with all the humility of which they were capable that he would in his royal bounty enable them to enjoy a continuance of the same. His Majesty made this reply with his own lips that if his subjects of the reformed religion conducted themselves well and lived in the obedience that God and nature required of them he would continue to them the enjoyment of the privileges of his edict and the chancellor would communicate to them his sentiments at greater length.

What the chancellor had to say was that (1) they were not to admit any more men to the ministry who were not native born Frenchmen. As he explained his meaning more fully the king interrupted him and said: 'I do not desire that any one already in the ministry be excluded from it.' (2) Their ministers should not be compelled to

approve of the canons of the Synod of Dort. His Majesty had no intention of depriving the churches of their freedom in matters concerning their faith but he had no intention either of being the patron of a new and foreign creed.

"The Synod submitted fully to the requests of his Majesty" and drew up a statement of doctrine that excluded all reference to the canons of the Synod of Dort.

The king also ordered the synod through the commissioners to admit henceforth no ministers as members of any political assembly. This prohibition was a corollary to that concerning the reception of foreigners. Both were occasioned immediately by the political activities of three of the most prominent Huguenot ministers, two of whom were Scots: Cameron, Primrose and Du Moulin. Primrose and Cameron as former pastors in Bordeaux had both come into collision with the Parlement of Guyenne. Now Louis forbade that either of them be "employed in any way in the churches or universities in France".¹

The question of the advisability of allowing

¹ Primrose went to London and became pastor of a French church there. Cameron unwilling to leave France and unable to support himself at Saumur by private teaching asked and obtained from this synod an allowance of one thousand livres for the current year. In 1624 he was allowed to accept a Chair in Theology at Montauban where he died two years later (1626) from a wound received in a dispute between zealots and moderates over the taking up of arms again. Du Moulin's offence was a letter written to James I and sent treacherously to Louis by the duke of Buckingham which said that the church of France was looking for help to the king of England. Du Moulin was allowed to return to France in 1626.

ministers to sit as deputies at political assemblies had been discussed already by many preceding synods. The practice had been sanctioned by the Synod of Saumur (1596) "because of the necessities of the time" although many members objected to it. This permission was continued by a resolution of the Synod of Vitré (1617). But at the request of several provinces political assemblies were urged to refrain from sending ministers as deputies to the Court. Over and over again individual ministers were forbidden to accept any such office whatever in the future. The Synod of Allais (1620) forbade all ministers to accept such a deputation to the Court or to the great lords and passed a resolution that any minister who did so should be severely censured and suspended from the ministry.

The reason assigned by Louis for his command was that these deputations distracted ministers in their duties if they did not divert them entirely from their spiritual functions. The synod took occasion to point out to the king that he was denying to the Huguenots privileges which were freely enjoyed by the clergy of the Gallican church. In the end they followed his instructions. Their reasons for doing so were the same as his own. All past synods had desired this very thing because the absence of pastors meant the neglect of congregations and the appearance of divisions and disputes. It meant that too many were absent at one time as well as that certain among them were diverted from their sacred calling and induced to take part in transactions that were shameful and dishonest.

Each of these ever recurring orders and restrictions seemed like a renewal of persecution. The mutilated body of protestantism was being tortured still further for the express purpose of maddening the patient or causing him to bleed to death.

Rohan after leaving Montpellier had gone to Upper Languedoc to assist there in the work of pacification. In his reports he continued to urge the king to carry out the provisions of the peace especially in regard to Montpellier, La Rochelle and the *chambre de l'édit*. Concerning the latter the Estates General of Languedoc had recommended that it be removed from Castres owing to religious unrest there and established at Lisle d'Albigeois, a thoroughly Catholic centre. This was altogether objectionable to the Huguenots and they prayed Louis to make better provision for the unfettered action of this court of justice. Rohan supported their protest and the king ordered the court to sit at Béziers where it remained in spite of the Estates until 1626.

The king began to weary however of the "long discours" of the leader of the Huguenots. He wrote Rohan declaring that the commissioners had orders to carry out the edict of peace to the letter and begged him to cease his importunities.

While I am ready to believe that the freedom with which you present your views to me concerning what you claim should be done in this matter, arises from your devotion to my service, nevertheless I desire you to know that I am so punctilious in the fulfilment of my promises and so open to the complaints of my subjects that I desire no other intermediary than their petitions. There is no need of such frequent reminders from yourself.

This rebuke silenced Rohan but his silence drew down upon him the renewed censure of his co-religionists. Their accusations he repudiated in his *Discours sur la paix de Montpellier* which he wrote in the course of the next year.

Neither persecution nor calumny will ever turn me from the firm resolution God has given me to devote my entire being to the good of His cause. Let my critics show me what it is right to do. I promise to second them better than they have seconded me. Forgetting what is past I shall embrace the cause of God with a loyal heart and esteem it a glory to suffer in His name.

He never quite recovered however from the effects of these misunderstandings and disputes.

King and ministers urged Rohan to come to court and "assume his proper station". Their reasons were perfectly obvious if not frankly stated. His coming and going could be better observed at Paris than at Castres. But the nobility of France was not yet reduced to the nullity that the next generation seemed to enjoy. Rohan excused himself. He respected the sentiments of the king so far as to absent himself voluntarily from the family domains in Brittany and Poitou and so give no ground for suspicion that he was conspiring with La Rochelle. He feared also that his appearance at Court would lead *ceux de la religion* to think that he was forsaking them. So he remained at Castres more solicitous for the good opinion of the Protestants who neglected him than for that of the Court which respected and feared him.

At Castres he remained for almost two years, removed from agitation, leading the simple life of the country gentleman, devoted to his family, his friends, reading, writing, manly exercises and religion.

During these years Rohan knew of the unrest in official protestantism and tried to assuage it by persisting in his efforts to obtain the just fulfilment of the peace and of the edicts. Rumours of a possible resumption of hostilities on one side and on the other reached him from time to time but he gave no sign of interest.

On March 30, 1623 the deputies-general had issued a circular letter to quiet Huguenot apprehension.

Although the rumour of war and especially of the siege of La Rochelle is widely circulated here (Paris) and from here has spread through the rest of France, we must say that we see no evidences of preparation for open and present war.

On November 27 following Louis issued a declaration saying that

although we have omitted no care to create peace for our subjects, yet we have been advised that certain among them of the so-called reformed religion, enemies of the public repose and desiring to profit by disturbances, who have even used the names of our cousins the dukes of Rohan and Soubise (which we cannot credit), have been going about under false pretexts and attempting to stir up our said subjects, urging them to raise money, fortify the places still in their hands, buy arms and make sundry other preparations opposed to the public peace. . . To arrest the course of such pernicious proceedings and to prevent our subjects from being abused by their evil practices

he confirmed the edicts and ordered the cessation of all such manifestations of dissatisfaction.

Rather than attempting to quiet unrest by royal fiat it would have been better perhaps to have sowed contentment by doing justice to the Huguenots, or even something more than justice. Open and fair treatment would have dispelled suspicion. But king and minister wished in the habitually

human way to anticipate the sure labour of time and circumstance.

There were men of moderate opinions who advocated openly generous treatment for the Huguenots. But they were few and such as there were the cardinal ridiculed for their religious indifference and bad judgment as he attempted to discredit all those who opposed him or differed from him.¹ Richelieu even ruined Fancan, once his mouth-piece, and allowed him to die in the Bastille because of his liberal opinions and the influence of his pen. There was real ground then for the suspicions of the Protestants. "The clergy, the parlements, the chief personages of the state spoke openly of extirpating heresy and of beginning with La Rochelle".² "All persons and communities and the greater number of the great governing bodies of this realm were so prejudiced in favour of the idea that war was presently to be made upon the Huguenots that they publicly accused of being bad Catholics those who had merely expressed dissent from that idea."³

Huguenot suspicions gathered into a storm about the port of Blavet (now Lorient) on the coast of Brittany not far from La Rochelle. There Richelieu had assembled vessels from various sources and was outfitting them as the nucleus of a fleet. Perhaps it was true that this fleet was intended to ravage the Spanish Main, but the Huguenots looked at it through the same eyes as those

¹ Richelieu, 1: 358.

² Benoit, 2: 454.

³ Richelieu, 1: 357.

with which they watched Fort Louis. They thought both fort and fleet were intended for the destruction of the great Protestant maritime port. If the fleet were captured there was a chance that they might bargain successfully for the destruction of the fort.

Soubise had now returned from England where he had fled after his disastrous defeat by Louis. Like Rohan he had been proscribed and declared guilty of high treason but both had been pardoned by the peace of Montpellier. La Rochelle appealed to him. He went to Castres and consulted his brother asking for Rohan's support only in case of the success of his enterprise, willing to accept all responsibility if he failed. Rohan hesitated to embroil himself anew. The attitude of the Protestants and the difficulties he had met in the late rising had eaten into his soul. Moreover a rebellion at this moment would jeopardize the nation's foreign policy by its effect on the English and Dutch alliances. Rohan however could not resist his brother's entreaties. Much less could he contemplate calmly the impending ruin of La Rochelle. The fate of protestantism was more closely bound up with that city than ever. Its ruin was for Rohan the ruin of the Huguenots. He promised his help.

Soubise returned to Poitou in January 1625, gathered a few vessels and took possession of the island of Ré, off La Rochelle. This island was a convenient base. There he could conduct his enterprise without openly involving La Rochelle and he could anticipate as well any movement on the part of the royal fleet. On the night of the

seventeenth he sailed into the harbour, captured the fleet and made an assault on the fort. Some of his own followers forewarned the fort and the attack was unsuccessful. Adverse winds kept him in the harbour and Vendôme shut off his escape by stretching a cable across the entrance. Caught like a rat in a trap he remained there for three weeks under the fire of the guns from the fort.

Rohan, not to forsake his brother, attempted a rising in the south, to take place at the same time as the attack upon Blavet and sent messengers through Guyenne, Languedoc and Dauphiny to warn the Protestants of his plan. One of his messengers was arrested. The plot was discovered. All protestantism was seized with terror. Within a week the brothers were disavowed on every hand. The deputies-general, the nobles, the church of Paris, Montauban, many cities of the south, La Rochelle itself, all joined in disowning the enterprise and execrating all Protestants who had taken up arms. On January 25 the king issued a decree declaring Soubise and his adherents guilty of treason but giving them a month in which to obtain pardon.

Within two weeks after the publication of this decree Soubise had cut the cable and was out to sea taking ten or twelve naval vessels of the king's fleet with him. He regained his base and captured in addition the island of Oléron. Thereupon many Protestants suffered another change of heart, notably La Rochelle, and joined hands with him whom they had lately execrated as a pirate.

It was not long before Soubise's fleet numbered

seventy-four vessels. With them he was master of the sea. He defied all the forces the king could muster and ravaged the coasts of France from Brittany to Languedoc. Louis, to whose allies this outbreak was a severe shock, appealed for help to England and Holland. But while James fatuously promised help "nothing would induce English seamen to serve in such a cause and the government . . . encouraged their resistance".¹ A fleet actually sailed but when the sailors learned their destination they raised anchor and sailed back to England. In spite of Rohan's appeal to the Estates the Dutch dared not refuse help to Louis, but Soubise crippled the aid they sent by capturing five of their vessels. Then he returned to his lair.

Hoping to profit by the prestige the Protestants had gained by Soubise's attack upon Blavet in January Rohan, hopeless of gaining adequate support on land, listened to proposals from Richelieu. The Cardinal offered him the command of the enterprise concerted by France, Venice and Savoy against Genoa, and to Soubise the command of the allied fleet. La Rochelle's insistence on the destruction of Fort Louis broke up the negotiations. But Rohan was not to be enticed away from the *Cause*.

Now the ability and energy of Richelieu began to appear. While one of his armies devastated the south he built a new fleet on the ruins of the old, borrowed seven vessels from England and manned them and with the assistance of the Dutch destroyed the forces of Soubise. The island of Ré

¹ Hunt, vol. 7: 137.

capitulated September 18 and Soubise sailed once more for England.

Rohan was driven to the greatest extremes to recruit men. He was disowned on every hand. England and Nassau forsook him. Few of the Huguenot ministers supported him. The upper and middle classes were all against him. Many cities and towns, among them his own city, closed their gates on him. Most of his most ardent supporters in the first rising turned away from him. When he found support it was among the peasants and poorer classes whose minds were easily moved by the appeals of bigotry.

Rohan believed that the existence of protestantism in France was at stake. His attitude became that of a fanatic and his acts those of a demagogue appealing to popular passion. Ministers accompanied him as he drove through the country. As he entered a town the Bible was carried in front of him. Before addressing the people he prayed long and openly on the steps of the church.

The duchess aided her husband in his recruiting campaign and added her touch of picturesqueness to the tragic situation. Her sister-in-law had lately died and she drove through the country in her trappings of mourning. Her carriage, horses, outriders were draped in black. Servants carried burning torches to light her path. It was a strange kind of fiery cross and terrified the peasantry along her route. She did more. When the royal army appeared before Castres, Rohan being absent, she mounted the walls and directed the resistance until the arrival of reinforcements.

Rohan was not a mountebank nor a hypocrite. He had nothing to gain and everything to lose. He was passionate, sentimental, profoundly religious and somewhat theatrical. He was convinced that the Court was determined to destroy protestantism. And he was right. But all his efforts were of little avail. He went through the old movements, convoked assemblies, swore an oath of union with La Rochelle, was proclaimed General of the churches. Collisions occurred between the populace who favoured him and the municipal fathers who feared the loss of the privileges of their cities. In one of these collisions at Montauban the minister Cameron was fatally wounded and Ollier, another minister, driven from the city. His propagandist campaign was for the purpose of encouraging the people to force their will on the constituted authority and in this way the scales were turned in several places, among others La Rochelle, Montauban and Castres. Yet he succeeded in recruiting only about 2,500 men. He occupied several towns, failed in his assaults upon others. Nîmes, Uzès, Alais and other places remained closed to him. The *chambre de l'édit* was against him and tried to keep the peace. He committed the unpardonable sin in a Huguenot by parleying with the Spaniard.

The royal army, 6,000 strong, had arrived at Toulouse on June 9 with orders to wage a merciless war. They carried out their instructions to the letter, pillaging and burning, sparing neither age nor sex, vineyard nor wheatfield, cabin nor château.

Everybody that bore arms was put to the sword. Others were hanged. At the château of Bonnac a man was given his life provided he hanged the others, among them his own father. He did it. Sometimes Rohan's forces were victorious but he paid for it in a frightful effusion of blood relatively to the forces engaged. He captured Sommières but was attacked in turn by Valençay with 1,000 men and defeated, leaving 200 dead on the field out of 700. Sheds and barns quickly became fortresses and forty or fifty men held an army at bay until the building was destroyed and the little band exterminated. So this ghastly work went on in a land usually radiant and fertile, now covered with ruins of hamlets and châteaux, churches and the cottages of the poor. The peasant is the great sufferer. Rohan's description of the country surrounding Montauban is typical.

The most hardened heart would have been moved with compassion at the sight of the many wretched objects that were to be seen on every hand. In the darkness we could see a thousand fires dotted about a meadow lying between two streams. Wheat, vines, orchards, houses, everything had been destroyed.

The object of the royal army is to rob the rebel army of the means of surviving, to occupy as many places as possible and to destroy others. Rohan's numbers were too slight to permit a decisive engagement. His only plan of campaign is to provision and reinforce his strongholds, to harrass the enemy and to divert him from his plans by assaults on loyal cities. His generalship was infinitely superior to that of the king's commanders but his forces were hopelessly inadequate.

In a letter dated May 25 Richelieu invited the Protestants to send deputies to Fontainebleau to discuss conditions of peace. Of the option that confronted him either to make peace with the Huguenots and prosecute the Spanish war or to crush the Huguenots at once, he had apparently chosen the latter.¹ On July 5 the deputies, who had brought with them a cahier of grievances, were admitted to an audience with the king. The Protestants had abandoned some of their earlier demands. They consented to peace provided that Rohan and Soubise were indemnified, that a general amnesty was proclaimed and Fort Louis demolished. Richelieu did his best to have these terms sanctioned. Rohan was to have a command in Italy. Soubise was to be made duc and peer. The war debts of both were to be paid. Fort Louis was to be rased. While waiting for instructions from La Rochelle "the deputies limited themselves to thanking the king for having received their cahier so graciously. After which they fell on their knees and begged him to give them on the spot an oral promise that he would grant them a patent for the demolition of the fort. The king promised there and then". The victory of Soubise hastened matters and peace seemed certain. But the royal army before La Rochelle made a brutal attack on peaceable harvesters and burned a great part of their crop. Thereupon La Rochelle broke off negotiations and ordered the resumption of hostilities.

After these events and especially after the defeat

¹ Richelieu, 1: 356 ff.

of Soubise and his flight to England the Court was less disposed to peace than ever. But certain Protestant cities of the south had taken offence at La Rochelle's inflexibility and selfish pre-occupation with its own interests. They thought it was unfair that the provinces which were bearing the brunt of the war should be at the mercy of a city that had scarcely felt the edge of it. They threatened to make a separate peace. This seemed to be Richelieu's opportunity. It was not his desire to make a sincere peace. He was cajoling the Protestants until the occasion was ripe for smiting them and wiping out their *imperium*. This could be more easily attained by fomenting division among them. In October he made proposals of peace to the Protestants of the south definitely excepting Soubise and La Rochelle.¹

It turned out that the moment was unhappily chosen. The Protestants seemed to have been undone but suddenly Rohan's fortunes appeared at their flood.

The position of the Huguenot leader had been greatly strengthened. After a long struggle the royalists of the important city of Nîmes had been defeated by the partisans of Rohan and the city had declared for him. In the train of Nîmes came all Lower Languedoc and Vivarais. Eleventh hour conversions as these were, they embraced Rohan's cause ardently and raised an army of 5,500 men and made Rohan master of the whole region be-

¹ "His Majesty would not hear of the union they claimed to have with the people of La Rochelle because it smacked of faction and party." Richelieu, 1: 360.

tween Toulouse and the Rhône. The king's arms had received a severe check before Mas d'Azil after a prolonged siege. News had come from Soubise that an English fleet was being prepared to help them.

It was Rohan's chance. On October 25 an assembly of Upper and Lower Languedoc and the Cévennes was held at Milhau. Nine deputies were named and sent to Court. They were needlessly obsequious in their attitude and Richelieu seems to have taken advantage of their servility to make his conditions harder. He refused at first to discuss peace with La Rochelle, but later consented to admit that city on condition that its fortifications be rased, that an Intendant be received into the city and that no vessel enter or leave the fort without the consent of the Admiral of France. Otherwise it was granted the privileges of the Edict.

Such conditions were impossible. Rohan renewed the war.

Suddenly on December 24 Castres made a separate peace. It was a bitter moment for Rohan. Even his wife thought that he was beaten. The Court was sure of it. But Rohan hastened to Castres, addressed the people, arrested the leaders of the royalists and had their decision annulled on January 5, 1626. An assembly was held representing all the cities of the south and a petition sent to Louis praying him to make no peace without including La Rochelle. Once more Rohan had turned defeat into victory.

Richelieu yielded to circumstances and scandalized devout Catholics by bringing hostilities

to an end. They desired the adoption of an out and out religious policy and even in the king's council demanded the "purging of the inside" of the kingdom. "The dispute in the Valteline must be brought to an end in some way or another, if not as we would like then in the best way we can." No consideration of foreign policy was "of weight compared with the ruin of heresy which we can extirpate if we make this peace (with Spain)". Such was the opinion of Marillac. This was not however the path that Richelieu had marked out for France. His purpose was fixed upon the exaltation of his country's position in Europe. Pressure was being exerted by its allies. England was suspicious of French sincerity and threatened war unless the vessels lent to France were returned. Holland was repenting the aid she had given for the crushing of the Huguenots. Richelieu held out the olive branch by proposing peace with the Huguenots. England accepted the task of mediation and through special envoys, the Earl of Holland and Sir Dudley Carleton, induced the Protestants to accept the offers of Richelieu. The latter denies that he gave oral "assurance of the demolition of Fort Louis in due time". The expression is ambiguous enough at any rate to be by the wily cardinal. At all events the English ambassadors alleged the king's authority for the statement and a peace was patched up. It was signed February 5, accepted by the Huguenots March 21 and proclaimed by royal decree April 6. Charles I took upon himself the impossible task of being its guarantor to the Protestants.

A huge bonfire was lighted in Nîmes to celebrate the occasion. Rohan snatched a brand from the fire and stamping on it cried: "*Voilà ma généralité; je l'éteins à jamais et que Dieu nous assiste*". But this expressed only the momentary bitterness that was in his heart. It did not mean abandonment of the Huguenot cause. The peace was nothing but a respite. When Richelieu set his hand again to the work of destruction of political protestantism Rohan was still the champion of the dying cause.

If Richelieu had scandalized devout Romanists by his treaty with the heretic, he scandalized everybody by his next act. He made peace with Spain and duped the world by the treaty of Monzon, March 5, 1626. "By an unusually skilful handling of the situation the Huguenots were induced to accept peace for fear of Spain and the Spaniards to make peace for fear of the Huguenots." These two acts "gave the king peace within and without the kingdom and opened the way for the extermination of the Huguenot party which had divided the state for one hundred years". The Huguenots had to be destroyed because "as long as they have a foothold in France, the king will never be master within nor be able to enter upon any glorious enterprise without".¹ Such is Richelieu's interpretation of his own policy.

¹ Richelieu, 1: 361.

CHAPTER XII

THE DESTRUCTION OF HUGUENOT POLITICAL POWER

The edict that confirmed the peace lauded the royal benignity that had "preserved the greater part of our subjects of the so-called reformed religion in their fidelity and obedience", and the king's mercy to the few who had been in rebellion but had now "acknowledged the gravity of their error and had had recourse to the royal bounty as to their sole refuge". It proclaimed a general amnesty, confirmed previous edicts and restored the position of affairs as in 1620 in regard to Catholic and Protestant worship, seats of justice and finance, surety-towns and captured places. Political assemblies were again prohibited as by the edict of 1623, fortifications of any sort were forbidden and La Rochelle was forced to accept certain separate conditions.¹

This peace was just such as those that had preceded it. Nothing had been gained by the rebellion. Little had been lost. The difficulty was as always that its terms could not be carried out.

¹ The municipal government was restored to its oligarchic character as before 1610; commissioners were to reside in the city permanently if need be for the carrying out of peace conditions; the Roman Catholic religion was to be given full rights; Fort Louis was not to be destroyed but the garrison was to be kept under rigid discipline; the merchant fleet was to be brought under the national traffic rules.

Its execution was in the hands of local courts. The king's justice was more liberal than that of the people, but it was not strong enough to enforce the king's legislation in those parts of the kingdom where prejudice was particularly deep-rooted.

In the cahier of July 1625 the deputies had complained that rights of worship enjoyed until 1620 had been taken away in forty-three communities; cemeteries had been denied them in others; damages for destroyed houses of worship¹ could not be recovered; contributions to the support of the established church were still demanded in some localities; persons driven from their homes during the war were not allowed to return. In spite of favourable replies from the king these difficulties remained unsolved and others were arising continually in direct violation of the edicts of peace and of the orders of the king's commissioners.

Grievances of this nature were more numerous than ever because of the application since 1620 of the Edict of Nantes to Béarn and Navarre and by the reestablishment of catholicism in places like La Rochelle which had been exclusively Protestant since 1568. Some of the parlements were reluctant to accept the peace as it stood. That of Toulouse confirmed it only after modifying it. This court had roused the anger of the Protestants again and had added to its reputation as the "horrible slaughter-house of the reformed"

¹ Protestant churches in France were termed 'temples'. The word 'church' (*église*) was reserved for the Roman Catholic establishment.

by its abuse of justice in regard to Rohan's envoys to Spain. Two of these had fallen into its hands and the parlement had put both to death in spite of the amnesty of the peace, hurrying their trial and execution and deliberately delaying the registration of the edict until after the accomplishment of this judicial crime.

Out of this matter of the envoys to Spain had grown another complaint, this time of the royal commissioner. Under pressure from the commissioner the provincial Synod of Réalmont, representing Upper Languedoc and Upper Guyenne, which met in May, had taken cognizance of Rohan's negotiations with Spain and had ordered an inquiry into the matter for the purpose of hunting out any "who had adhered to the Spanish faction" actively or passively. No one was discovered but the whole proceeding was a malicious attempt to involve the Huguenot ministers in a general charge of treason, or at least to bring them into discredit.

These infractions of the edict and others were not overlooked by the National Synod which met in the autumn of this year at Castres.¹ Held at a critical time in the affairs of the Huguenots this synod was important because of the business transacted and the calmness and dignity that characterized its proceedings.

The royal commissioner, Galland, extended to the synod the good wishes of the king, accompanying them with renewed assurances of the

¹ Sept. 16 to Nov. 5.

exact fulfilment of the edicts. He exhorted the Protestants to live in peace with the Roman Catholics and to break off all relations with foreign governments, "reposing with complete confidence in the word of the king". He said that Louis had shown the greatest benevolence to the Huguenot pastors and had employed members of their religion in the most important affairs of the state. He desired this synod to follow the example of the Synod of Réalmont in regard to the Spanish negotiations, not that those involved should be prosecuted but merely "to clear the reputation of those who had persisted in their duty". He forbade ministers to leave the country temporarily or permanently "so that they would not be suborned by foreign customs and different habits of life".

The synod replied thanking the king for peace and declaring complete devotion to the Crown. But it refused to accept calmly the imputations in the address of the commissioner. The Protestants, it declared, were "models of true Christian patience in putting up with the ill-treatment they had received in all parts of the kingdom. Yet the synod would exhort the churches to abound in Christian patience and to love peace and to employ these virtues towards our compatriots of the Roman religion". They denied the insinuation that they had had any "treasonous dealings with the Spaniard or with the enemies of the Crown" and turned the commissioner's fire by protesting their horror of the doctrine that kings might justly be assassinated: a direct hit at the Jesuits who had been involved in this controversy for a genera-

tion, and who were still held by the Huguenots to be guilty of the death of Henry IV.

In regard to the negotiations with Spain "they could not conceal their resentment against the great wrong that had been done the Synod of Réalmont when it had been forced by the royal commissioner to pass a resolution which seemed to be a confession that some ministers had been accused of secret dealings with Spain although after a most thorough investigation not a single one had been found guilty of this crime".

One of the deputies-general (Maniald) having died the old dispute over elections was revived. The king, as Henry IV had done, requested the nomination of six persons "qualified to fill such a post whether members of the synod or not, provided only that they were loyal and well disposed towards his service and to the public peace and provided also that they own allegiance to no one save his Majesty alone".

Thus at every turn came up the questions that had caused irritation and dissension ever since Henry IV had determined to put an end to political assemblies. By this synod they were discussed with gravity and without rancour. Protest was made with firmness and intelligence rather than with passion. One can even imagine that these sober puritans smiled grimly over the neatness with which they countered the royal thrusts.

In the matter of the present election of deputies they pointed out that this was a political matter in which they could not act since both king and synod had prohibited ecclesiastics from discussing

political questions. They sent special delegates to Louis with the request that the edicts be carried out in this matter. They desired that his promises be fulfilled "in every point".

The delegates obtained some slight satisfaction. They presented to the synod from the king an order to the Parlement of Toulouse to register the edict as it stood and instructions to the commissioners in various provinces to carry out the edict "very exactly". A patent renewed the royal grants. But the king "would in no wise consent to a political assembly." If need be he would name the deputies himself but he desired the advice of the synod.

Thereupon the synod named six persons "without prejudice to the rights of the General Assembly". It decreed a general fast and dissolved.

Trouble had been brewing for a year between France and England. Charles I had found it impossible to carry out the secret conditions of his marriage with Henrietta of France. Relations between the two countries were greatly strained. In August 1626 Henrietta's French household was expelled. The treaty of Monzon, contracted in April between France and Spain, explained French unwillingness to aid England in her attack upon Cadiz. England retaliated by seizing French ships wherever she found them.

In preparation for the impending struggle France made an alliance with Spain against England, alleging her sympathy with Spain's desire for the extinction of heresy in Europe but limiting

herself to a promise of aid against England and a war upon heresy within her own boundaries (April 1627).

The opportunity for fulfilling this undertaking in regard to heresy at home came sooner, perhaps, than Richelieu expected. But he was well prepared. He had broken a cabal of the court directed against himself and involving many notables including the king's brother and the queen herself. He had pacified parlement and clergy. He had placated the Jesuits. An Assembly of Notables, convoked in December 1616, had considered many general measures concerning commerce, morals, and justice. It approved also of the raising of money to provide vessels, troops and material for "a great and impending war". To quiet the apprehensions of the Huguenot, Richelieu used the soothing influence of money, office and the soft word.

La Rochelle accepted its fate sulkily. Royalist sympathizers were increasing in numbers and power but the mass remained implacable. The opening of Catholic churches did not pass without disturbances. When the commissioners began to reorganize the municipal government in accordance with the terms of the treaty there was great opposition on the part of the people, who saw themselves being deprived of their hold on the city's affairs. Order was soon established but some features of the old form of government survived the work of the commissioners.

Fort Louis still stood to remind the city of its

humiliation and the duplicity of the government. Two new fortresses were constructed also on the island of Ré and controlled the approaches to the inner harbour. The discipline of the troops in Fort Louis was no better than before. The deputies-general complained that "the soldiers went about the hamlets on the outskirts of the city plundering and robbing and killing the people they met and made it so that the inhabitants could not leave the city without fear of their lives".

The Huguenots took seriously the English guarantee of the last peace. They turned to it now as to their only hope. They trusted to it all through the troubles that follow. They cling to it with the passion of despair.

The situation of La Rochelle was sinister enough. It appealed to Rohan and to Charles I. In England Soubise, supported by the ambassador of Savoy, exerted every effort to induce Charles to make good his supposed guarantee. Charles saw in this popular question of aid to the Huguenots an opportunity of bringing to an end his present parliamentary difficulties and in the spring sent an envoy to Rohan "to convey to him the resentment he felt at the deception practised on the French Protestants as a result of his own intervention. He saw clearly that instead of giving La Rochelle its liberty preparations were going forward for its oppression. He desired Rohan to lay their grievances before him in order that he might legitimately demand reparation for the infraction of the treaty". In its reply to the remonstrances of the French king concerning Charles'

failure to live up to his engagements in the marriage treaty the council of the King of England charged Louis with his failure "to fulfil the articles agreed upon with the Protestants of his realm and particularly with those of La Rochelle, which they had accepted at the instant mediation of his Majesty so that his Majesty finds himself deeply involved not only by reason of the expectation and summons of those concerned but also because of the observation and judgment of the world to importune his brother-in-law for the maintenance of the peace".¹

Guided by the vanity of Buckingham and relying upon the aid of Lorraine and Savoy and of the Huguenots themselves, Charles declared war on France. Preparations were made for a great expedition. The ultimate object of the English king was the destruction of French and Spanish commerce and the establishment of English supremacy at sea. Incidentally assistance was to be given to the Huguenots. On June 27 Buckingham sailed away with 100 ships carrying 6,000 soldiers.

Buckingham had sent word of the plan of the expedition to Rohan, the Duke of Savoy and the Duke of Lorraine. "The king will put 3,000 men on three fleets. One will be sent to La Rochelle, the other to Guyenne, the third to Normandy. 10,000 men will be disembarked at each of these three places. We purpose closing the mouths of the Seine, the Loire and the Gironde. We pray you, sir, to hold yourself in readiness to join with a good body of Protestants the English troops

¹ *Mercure françois*, 13: 162, quoted in Baird, 1: 280.

who are to land by the river at Bordeaux." The Duke of Savoy was to create a diversion in Provence and to furnish 500 men to Rohan. Lorraine promised 1,000. Rohan was to contribute 4,000 foot and 200 horse.

Buckingham's plans were known to the French government. His agent had been seized in Lorraine. His papers were taken from him and he was thrown into the Bastille. Richelieu tried at once to embarrass Rohan by the arrest of his mother and sister. But they had been warned and had already left Paris for La Rochelle.

The news of the sailing of the English fleet toward French shores caused great excitement in France. But Richelieu's plans had been laid long since. He had been occupied with the creation of a fleet for two years. He had abolished the post of Admiral of France held by Montmorency, who resigned it in expectation of the constable's sword, and had had himself appointed Superintendent of Navigation and Commerce for France. He had taken over from the Queen-Mother the government of the city and port of Brouage which became the headquarters of the fleet. He bought the government of Le Havre and Honfleur. He had pushed on the fortifications of the ocean ports, La Rochelle among others. His plan of campaign was ready. At the news of the sailing of the English fleet, suspecting its objective, he sent an army into Poitou.

The story of Buckingham's venture need hardly be retold. His incapacity doomed it from the start. The indecision of La Rochelle complicated matters and made suffering worse.

On July 20, in the morning, Buckingham's fleet was sighted off the island of Ré outside of the harbour of La Rochelle. Ré is a strip of land eighteen miles long and three wide. It was defended by the citadel of St. Martin and La Prée fort, two of the fortresses of which La Rochelle complained. St. Martin was not yet completed.

It must have been a tremendous surprise to Buckingham to find that admission to the city was refused him. The mayor was a royalist and declared that the enemies of the king were the enemies of La Rochelle. Soubise, who was with the English fleet, was refused also "for the welfare and preservation of La Rochelle and the churches of France". The Duchess of Rohan hearing that her son was at the gates went to meet him and led him into the city amid the acclamations of the populace.

With Soubise was Buckingham's secretary, Sir Wm. Beecher.

At the City Hall Beecher addressed the people. He recounted the events that had led to the appearance of the fleet before La Rochelle. "Far from wishing to invade the states of the king his brother-in-law, his Majesty is disposed to live in perfect accord with him provided that all those who profess our holy religion in France enjoy in security full freedom of conscience and the privileges that have been granted them. The actions of the council of the King of France have convinced his Majesty that the ruin of the adherents of our religion has been determined upon. God has put your fate in

your own hands. It is yours to choose. I ask only a prompt and positive answer."

Beecher's address had been printed and distributed beforehand. It stirred the people as Rohan might have done. They called for war. But the mayor and councillors deferred an answer on the plausible grounds that they must consult the rest of the communion.

Soubise and Saint Blancard, one of Rohan's most trusted officers, decided that they would save the situation. They assured Buckingham of the co-operation of La Rochelle.

On July 22 Buckingham made a landing on the island of Ré in the face of desperate resistance. The governor of the island, Toiras, retired upon the unfinished works at St. Martin. Instead of storming the fortress at once, as Soubise wished, Buckingham began the slow process of a siege.

The forces of Toiras were greatly inferior to those with Buckingham and he was short of food. He dispatched messengers to Richelieu and began to complete the curtains that connected the bastions of the fort.

La Rochelle remained undecided for a month. Messengers were sent to Rohan praying him "to tell us as soon as possible what answer we ought to make".

His Britannic Majesty offers us powerful assistance and leaves us complete freedom to remain under the dominion of our lawful sovereign. The only condition demanded of us is that we make no treaty without his consent and his Majesty undertakes to act in the same way towards us.

On their side the royal commissioners in La

Rochelle had rallied the Catholics and had appealed for aid to Vendôme in Brittany.

Angoulême with the royal army pitched camp under the walls of the city on August 15. His arrival shocked the people out of their indifference. Now they knew their own minds. It was no longer necessary to wait for answers from the south. Many of the royalists were banished. The city was put under the control of the mayor and two extraordinary councils. Provision was made for the coining of money, the fortification of the city and the creation of land and sea forces. On September 21 the councils issued a bitter manifesto. "Since everything has been planned for our ruin let us take counsel only of our despair. One course alone is open to us, that is to defend ourselves."

In the south there was as little eagerness for a fresh rising as there had been at La Rochelle. One city waited for the other to move. Small places followed the example of the larger cities. The latter were divided by faction and could come to no decision. The hand of Richelieu was evident everywhere. Rohan was thrown into the greatest dejection. "It is harder to fight the cowardice, the irreligion and the infidelity of the Protestants than the ill-will of our enemies."

A General Assembly being out of the question, Rohan took it upon himself to consult the churches, as he had for the same reasons, taken it upon himself to draw up a list of grievances for the English king. The greatest secrecy had to be observed.

Otherwise his plans would have been divulged and action thwarted.

Rohan invited delegates from all "the chief communities" of the Cévennes and Lower Languedoc to Nîmes to confer on "certain matters of especial concern to them". He wrote to each individual so that no one of them knew that any others were invited. Representatives came from twelve cities. There was not a full deputation from Uzès so Rohan took them all to that city and an Assembly was constituted. His eloquence moved them as it always did. Unanimously they asked him to "take back the *généralité*" he had renounced at Nîmes eighteen months earlier. They authorized him to convoke a General Assembly for the duration of the war, to call upon the Protestants to renew the oath of union, and to accept the alliance of England on the terms mentioned by La Rochelle.

Rohan conducted these affairs at his own expense "so as not to offend the people". He raised an army of 6,000 men and created a reserve by calling all of Languedoc and the Cévennes to arms. His manifesto and declaration of war appeared at the end of September, a few days after that of La Rochelle.

Rohan's difficulties were increased a thousand-fold by the activities of the agents of Richelieu who succeeded by diplomacy, intrigue and bribery in keeping many sections loyal to the king. Ever since the signature of the last peace the cardinal had been working quietly to undermine the influence of the *exaltés*. Elections were manipulated

so as to put loyalists into office. Money was not lacking to buy those who were sensitive to such an appeal. Rohan was watched in the hope that he might compromise himself.

Le Masuyer, president of the Parlement of Toulouse, was one of Richelieu's most ardent apostles. He was violent and unscrupulous. It was he who kept the edict of peace in his pocket until Rohan's agents to Madrid had been done away with. He made it impossible for the Huguenots to obtain justice in either the Parlement of Toulouse or the *chambre de l'édit* at Castres. He forced Rohan's friends out of office wherever he could make his influence felt. He pursued the Huguenots for offences committed during the war long after the amnesty had been proclaimed. He caused the Parlement of Toulouse to offer a reward of 50,000 crowns for the assassination of Rohan. In consequence four attempts were made to win the reward.

Rohan's complaints to Louis concerning these matters were never answered.

Le Masuyer deprecated all clemency and applauded the harsh cruelties of some of Louis' generals during the coming war. One of his colleagues described him as a man "who hated the Huguenots so much that he gave no consideration to good faith when it was a question of doing them some hurt".

But these ways were not the ways desired by Richelieu. The cardinal insisted upon methods that would calm the minds of the Huguenots and hold them in their fidelity to the king. Arms were

his last recourse. He showed kindness to those who remained faithful, pardoned rebels and ordered that the Edict of Nantes be observed exactly.

Auguste Galland was an agent after Richelieu's own heart. He was a Protestant, a scholar, a refined and courteous gentleman, and a warm supporter of the monarchy. He represented the king in the synods of the Huguenots.

Galland's services at this time were of the greatest value to the Crown and most embarrassing to Rohan. He arrived in Languedoc in the beginning of October and learned from Le Masuyer of the agitation in men's minds. He spent the rest of the year in trying to destroy the influence of the Rohanist element in the cities of the south. Under his persuasion Montauban and Castres declared against the Huguenot leader. Other cities followed suit¹ renouncing "Rohan and all others who engaged in any enterprise against the state".

After all, neither the violence of Le Masuyer nor the suavity of Galland accomplished anything enduring. Their work modified materially Rohan's early plans of campaign. But sooner or later, for one reason or another, nearly all of these places, Rohanist at heart, renounced the timid policy of their officials and threw in their lot with their natural friends.

Angoulême was making little progress with the investment of La Rochelle. The king grew im-

¹ Briatexte, Pamiers, Mazères, Saverdun, Mas d'Azil, Sorrèze, Puylaurens, Réalmont, Rocquecourbe, Bastide St. Amant, La Bastide, Cabarède, Revel.

patient for action and was about to leave Paris to take command himself when he fell ill. In his stead he sent his brother the Duke of Orleans who arrived September 10. Only a month later, however, October 10, with the coming of Louis and Richelieu was any spirit infused into the operations. They decided to attack Buckingham before expected reinforcements reached him from England. A body of 2,000 picked troops, chosen by the king himself whose geniality filled the soldiers with enthusiasm, was appointed for the task with Marshal Schomberg at their head.

Buckingham had almost succeeded after a summer's blockade in starving out the little garrison at St. Martin. On October 7, Toiras made offers of surrender. The next day thirty-five vessels broke through the English fleet with provisions sufficient for a month. La Prée was re-victualled on the 16th and reinforced a fortnight later. An ill-equipped and half-hearted attack upon Toiras was repulsed and Buckingham, sick of the whole venture, started to re-embark his troops.

It was at this moment that Schomberg landed on the eastern end of the island opposite fort La Prée. He fell upon the retiring English. The retreat became a rout. Over 1,000 men were slain, 4 cannon and 44 flags were taken. On November 17, with scarcely half his original forces, Buckingham hoisted sail for England promising the despairing Rochellese that he would return in the spring.

After the departure of the English fleet Riche-

lieu set himself seriously to the reduction of the city. La Rochelle was reckoned to be the most strongly fortified place in Europe. Louis was not minded to suffer again such a humiliation as he had experienced before Montauban. He decided to starve La Rochelle into submission.

It was not long before all communication between the city and the outside world was cut off on the landward side. There remained the harbour. Richelieu thought that "if he had two months time in which to construct a dike in the harbour all the princes in the world could not succor La Rochelle".¹ The mouth of the harbour was about a mile in width and difficult of access. Work was begun at the end of November. The body of the dike was stone supported by piles. Where the water was deepest boats bound together and filled with masonry constituted the foundation. Spurs and sunken ships protected the main structure from the violence of the sea. The whole was surmounted by forts and cannon. Twenty-six men-of-war under Guise guarded it against the anticipated return of the English. A Spanish fleet of forty vessels were sent by the Madrid government at the request of Richelieu to assist in the work of defence. They arrived at Morbihan, took on provisions and sailed away without explanation for their action.

In January La Rochelle sent deputies to England to second Soubise in his plea for grain and aid. A new treaty was contracted by which England promised to help the city "on land and sea until

¹ Mémoires, 1: 357.

a settled peace had been obtained". Actual aid could not be sent until the spring.

Famine stared the Rochellese in the face. Slight relief was obtained from time to time by the capture of provisions destined for the royal army. On April 23 the king's return to the army after a two months respite in Paris was celebrated by a summons to the city to surrender. The city's reply was a closer organization for defence under a newly elected mayor, Jean Guiton. Jean Guiton had been admiral of the fleet in the two previous risings. His exploits on the sea had earned him the praise of Guise, the royal commander, and had made him the hero of the townspeople. He was the indomitable foe of submission. His spirit is well represented by the story that his first words on assuming the office of mayor, which he had already refused, were that he would "put his dagger into the heart of the first man who dared talk of surrender".

All the hopes of the Rochellese were fixed on the English fleet. At last it was sighted. Word was passed on to the city. The people illuminated their houses. They thought their sufferings were at an end. The fact is they had only begun.

The fleet on which the fate of La Rochelle and French protestantism seemed to hang consisted of upwards of 60 vessels and barges of provisions. It was under the command of Lord Denbigh, brother-in-law of Buckingham. Several days were spent in a discussion of plans of attack. The Huguenots on board pleaded for swift action. A few shots were exchanged with Guise. Then Lord

Denbigh weighed anchor and sailed away without having attempted even to pass provisions into the famine-stricken city.

New messengers were sent to England by the amazed city to ask the reason for this inexplicable conduct. In reply a letter from Charles adjured these cruelly deceived people "not to be discouraged. Hold out to the last day for I am determined to sacrifice my fleet rather than abandon you". Again a week later (May 27): "I shall employ all the forces of my kingdom for your deliverance until God has done me the favour of gaining an assured peace for you".

The summer passed with no further sign from England. On July 2 Richelieu threatened that unless the city surrendered in three days it might expect no mercy. Jean Guiton remained unmoved. The suffering of the people is not to be described. There was no food of any kind. The herbs in the streets and the domestic animals were all consumed. Even the food hoarders' supplies were exhausted. Pulp of parchment, of leather, of straw, was being used as food. The plight of the townspeople was revealed to the king when the gates were opened and old men and women and children, all who could not bear arms and could walk, came out and approached the royal army and "begged for freedom or food. But all the courtesy they received was that the men were stripped naked as your hand and the women left with nothing but their underclothing and all were driven back into the city with whips and forks and halbards and

muskets". Bodies lay unburied in the streets. Guards were set over the cemeteries.

At last, the city being in this extremity, at the end of September (28) another English fleet appeared, commanded by the Earl of Lindsey. One hundred ships, merchantmen and men-of-war were in the roads. But the third attempt did Englishmen no more credit than the other two. Two days (October 3 and 4) were spent in futile cannonading. A few fire-ships were sent toward the French fleet but were sunk, having done no harm. Soubise, who was in command of the vanguard, begged the English admiral to follow him in an attempt to force the passage through the centre of the dike. On October 10 Guiton wrote to the deputies on board the English fleet: "We are in the direst straits. It is by a miracle of God that we have lasted until now. Your skirmishes would have been more worth while if they had ended in an attack. As for the dike, if you had attacked it in the middle, where the floating vessels are, your fire would have made an adequate passage. Or if that had failed a way could be cut through at low tide with axes and saws. Act without delay or we perish".

The Englishman was afraid to close in with the French fleet or to make an assault on the dike and withdrew out of the range of gun-fire.

Richelieu sent his English prisoners back to Lindsey and offered to allow Lindsey to inspect the French operations. The English admiral sent a representative, Walter Montague. Montague had been Buckingham's envoy to Rohan. He had been

arrested in Lorraine but released after a period in the Bastille. Having made a tour of inspection with Richelieu, Montague was convinced that relief for La Rochelle was impossible.

The result of Montague's experience was that deputies from the French on the English fleet and from La Rochelle met the cardinal and learned the terms of capitulation. The city could do no more. It capitulated on October 29.

The next day the cardinal and the royal army entered the city. "The city was full of dead", says Richelieu, "in the houses and in the streets". Perhaps 20,000 people, or more than two-thirds of the total population of La Rochelle had perished in this siege for religion's sake and for freedom.

Louis entered the city November 1. He showed the greatest concern for the survivors. He brought with him herds of sheep and oxen and 3,000 wagons of provisions. A crier went through the streets offering bread to those who asked for it.

On November 18 an edict was decreed abolishing the corporation of the city and uniting the city to the royal domain. Its privileges were suppressed, arms were confiscated, the ramparts were rased, "the foundations torn up and the moats filled, in order that on all sides access will be so free and easy that a plough may pass over it as over fallow land". The town bell, used to call the citizens together, was melted. Freedom of worship was allowed the Protestants but churches that had been Catholic were restored. An Intendant was installed and a bishopric created. Protestants not domiciled at La Rochelle before the descent of Buckingham

were banished. Strangers were not allowed in the city except by special permission.

Thus fell "the metropolis of the French Protestants", whose pride of independence dated back three centuries.

Rome exulted in its fall as greatly as the clergy of France. The city was brilliantly illuminated, processions were held, a plenary indulgence was issued. Urban VIII congratulated Louis on his great victory,

the trophies of which are exalted to heaven; its glories the coming centuries will never pass over in silence. . . . "Let the sinner see it and rage and the synagogue of Satan expire with chagrin. The Christian king fights for religion and the King of armies fights for the king (of France)".¹

Rohan remained to be crushed.

During the winter Rohan's star had grown brighter. His appearance in Upper Languedoc in November (1627) was the signal for the opening to him of gates that Galland thought he had closed securely. It was plain that the people were for Rohan. He captured Revel, Saverdun, Pamiers, Mas d'Azil and Carla. After these conquests, Réalmont, Mazères and other places came over to him.

Rohan now turned back to meet Condé. Condé, commander-in-chief of the armies of the south, had descended the Rhône and was devastating Vivarais. Rohan failed in an attempt on Castres and was ignominiously defeated at Montpellier. He missed Condé, who went on to Toulouse for the winter. He held an Assembly at Alais, which promised to

¹ Cf. Lavissee, 6, pt. 2: 270.

raise men, renewed the oath of union and swore to accept no peace that was not acceptable to England, to La Rochelle and to all the churches. Then he swept north from Uzès to Privas summoning the inhabitants to arms, establishing concord and retaking the towns captured by Condé. Having freed the Rhône from Condé's hold, and opened up communications with Savoy, he crossed again to Upper Languedoc where the Protestants were calling for help.

Condé spent the winter in Toulouse and opened his spring campaign by an attack (March 6) on Pamiers, which he captured. With his habitual cruelty Condé shot, hung or sent to the galleys the entire garrison and handed the town over to the soldiery for plunder. Condé hoped to intercept Rohan as he came towards Montauban. He marched north and took Réalmont (April 30). He sacked the place and practised barbarities there similar to those that had marked his capture of Pamiers and other towns. His methods were even more successful than those of Rohan for arousing the Huguenot population. At the sight of the atrocities committed by the royal army Castres and Montauban declared for Rohan. At the little town of St. Affrique, Condé was soundly beaten (June 5-6), women and young girls joining in the defense. Then he retraced his steps and began to devastate the region about Castres.

Meanwhile in order to recover the ground lost in the Cévennes and Vivarais by the operations of Rohan, Condé had sent Montmorency with 8,000 men there. Montmorency recaptured many places

and undertook a systematic devastation of the country about the larger towns, Alais, Anduze, Uzès and Nîmes. Uniting once more with Condé they drove Rohan into the mountains.

Thus backward and forward rolled this savage tide of brigandage and murder. The royal armies sweep over Huguenot areas and the Huguenots sweep over Catholic areas. They take, lose, re-take the same places over and over again. Fortifications were built and rebuilt, towns disappeared in fire and rose again from their ashes, human beings lost their homes and restored them in a land that had been the scene of strife for fifteen hundred years. Condé's barbarity in this war shocked Catholic and Protestant alike and drove peaceful towns into rebellion. Montmorency's mercy is as striking as the cruelty of Condé or of Ventadour and saved many a place otherwise lost. Rohan observed at least the usages of civilized warfare, if it is possible to use such a phrase.

The fall of La Rochelle "caused the utmost consternation" among the Huguenots. Was it not for that city they had rushed to arms. With its surrender the reason for war was gone. Encouraged by the edict which offered mercy to the penitent and threatened all those who persisted in adhering to their "rebellious and criminal leader", they began to think of making submission individually. Charges of self-interest were circulated once more against Rohan. The convocation of the General Assembly was demanded. It met at Nîmes in March, 1629. There again Rohan weathered the storm. The Assembly decided that the union

would be maintained, and a peace sought which would embrace the whole body of churches and which England would sanction. Rohan was authorized to continue his appeals to the King of England who to the last moment assured him of English support to the bitter end. He was authorized also to continue the negotiations begun with Spain in the autumn of 1628.

On April 24 England signed a peace with France in which her promises to the Huguenots were forgotten.

On May 3 Rohan in urgent need of money signed a treaty with Spain. In return for an annual subsidy of 300,000 gold ducats Rohan promised to maintain in the field a force of 12,000 foot and 1,200 horse and "to further the designs of his Majesty with all his power at all times". The treaty stipulated further that if Rohan and his party succeeded in "establishing a separate state", he would respect the Catholic clergy and maintain them in their property and benefices.

Louis, having established the Duke of Nevers in the Mantuan succession, appeared in Vivarais. Rohan, forsaken by England, was driven to despair. He had 4,000 men. Louis had 25,000. The royal armies were in control of the south. They were stationed at the great centres and ravaged the regions roundabout. Between Privas and Nîmes were Montmorency and Schomberg. At Nîmes, d'Estrées. At Castres, Ventadour. At Milhau, Noailles. At Montauban, Condé and d'Epernon. Louis took and burned Privas amid scenes of the greatest cruelty. As he moved

southwards one town after the other made its submission. Then Alais capitulated (June 9) without firing a shot.

The whole thought of Rohan now was to obtain a peace that would embrace all the churches. Richelieu's trump card was dissension and division: His agents were everywhere urging Protestant communities to seek peace for themselves. In these circumstances "Rohan judged that a general peace, no matter how disadvantageous it was, would be better than the divisions that would infallibly follow if each community made its own peace". He called an Assembly at Nîmes which, with the king's permission, was transferred to Anduze because of its more central position. In the interests of unanimity he dispersed a factional assembly that was meeting without authorization at La Salle.

Rohan made proposals of peace. The cardinal "deemed it wiser to welcome the enemy who came as a suppliant than to run fresh risks for the mere sake of beating him". But Richelieu would not discuss terms. He insisted on imposing them as he had done with La Rochelle. This peace was to emanate purely and simply from the bounty of the king and the edict that published the peace was to be known as the Edict of Grace.

The peace was signed at Alais on June 28. The edict of grace was given at Nîmes in July following.

The king set out for Paris July 15 leaving Richelieu to carry out the work of pacification.

The methods of Richelieu were very different

from those employed three years previously and also in striking contrast to those of Condé. The cardinal treated these heated spirits with firmness but also with dignity and consideration. Montauban was refractory and protested against the edict. Bassompierre was about to lay siege to it. Richelieu knew a better way. He went himself to the city and learned its objections. It feared that the Parlement of Toulouse would not register the edict. He wrote to the president of the parlement and it was registered within twenty-four hours. The city asked that it might retain its walls. Richelieu persuaded them to look to the throne as a sufficient defense. When Huguenot pastors came to greet him as a body he told them that while they had no right to appear in such a way he was glad to overlook that fact "so that he could show them the affectionate regard in which he held them" at least as men of letters. He promised them that "as subjects, no distinction would be made between them and the Catholics". He judged it best to put a garrison in Montauban because it had been "the companion of La Rochelle and the head of the rebellion" in the south. Montauban made no resistance because the people were convinced of the "incorruptible good faith" of Richelieu. The Huguenots could trust the man who had sent Louis into their cities at the head of his troops "to show that he was master" and yet "had freed them from the fear they had of being treated as Montpellier had been, which received a large garrison and afterwards a citadel, although the ministers of his Majesty had given their word

not to put a garrison there, by making no changes to the prejudice of the inhabitants".¹ When Richelieu left Languedoc (August 24) the demolition of fortifications was well on its way. "Of thirty-eight places, twenty were completely cleared and the rest were likely to be finished by September 20"² except Montauban, Nîmes and Castres.

There were certain differences between this edict and its predecessors.

Before, surety-towns were left in the hands of the Huguenots. Now the king ordered that the fortifications of the rebellious cities should be rased, every one without exception. . . . Formerly the leaders of rebellions received establishments and gratifications and immense sums of money. . . . This time the duc de Rohan not only left Languedoc but the kingdom as well. . . . Far from receiving any gratification, he was given only 100,000 crowns, which was not half of what he lost by the ruin of his buildings and the destruction of his forests. His private possessions were restored to him.³

It is a striking fact that in this Edict of Grace the will of Henry IV, the sponsor of the Edict of Nantes, seemed to be realizing itself. His expectation had been justified. The political privileges and the military establishment of the Protestants were wiped out. But they retained their civil and religious liberties. Unity of faith was declared to be the ideal of French national policy. While the edict left the Huguenots "in the free peaceful exercise of the "so-called reformed religion" it expressed the "desire for their conversion" and "exhorted them to put away all passion so that

¹ Richelieu, 2: 25.

² *Ibid.* 2: 32.

³ *Ibid.* p. 24.

they might be more capable of receiving light from heaven and of being brought back to the bosom of the Church". To this end the Roman Catholic religion was re-established wherever it had been abolished and Richelieu had free scope for the launching of his great missionary plans for the reunion of the Huguenot to the faith "in which the kings, our predecessors have lived uninterruptedly for more than eleven hundred years". Richelieu resisted all pressure for the inauguration of those methods of judicial harrassment which were to be successfully followed in the next reign. His reason for this resistance was the same as that of Henry the Great for granting the Edict of Nantes. "They would disturb the minds of men" and weaken the newly established peace.

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